From *Circus Factions: Blues and Greens at Rome and Byzantium*, by Alan Cameron (Oxford, 1976):
Chapter 10: Riots and Politics
Chapter 11: The Decline of the Factions

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X. Riots and Politics

IT was the all too frequent *riots* of the factions that most impressed—or rather appalled—contemporaries. Modern scholars prefer to write of 'insurrections' or 'demonstrations', or to talk of the factions 'inciting' riots, thereby implying a serious, political motive behind their behaviour. There is in fact abundant and revealing evidence about the true nature of these riots, systematically ignored in modern studies because it implies such a very different interpretation of faction activity in general.

The typology of a faction riot

At the risk of grossly oversimplifying a large subject (which has yet to find its historian)[1] four basic categories of riot (often overlapping, of course) can probably be distinguished in the late empire: economic (mainly corn riots in time of famine); political (usually demonstrations against unpopular taxes or ministers, but occasionally developing into a riot); religious (at Church Councils and episcopal elections, often the work of monks); and what would nowadays be called just hooliganism.

Modern historians, while scrutinizing every last document bearing on the price of corn, have turned up their noses at hooliganism, as a subject unworthy of scholarly study.[2] It is none the less a serious phenomenon, not confined to one time or place (the student *eversores* of young Augustine's Carthage are a classic example),[3] and not to be explained solely in terms of moral stereotypes. It may be that the soccer hooligan of today and the Blues and Greens of Byzantium can cast mutual illumination on each other.

[1] Martindale's unpublished 'Public Disorders' is a good start, and Evelyne Patlagean's *Pauvreté économique et pauvreté sociale à Byzance du IV^e^ au VII^e^ siècle* will be a major contribution on the social and economic side.

[2] See however Stanley Cohen, 'The politics of vandalism', *New Society* 12 Dec. 1968, 872–8 and *Folk Devils and Moral Panics* (1972); also Ian Taylor's chapter in Cohen (ed.), *Images of Deviance* (1971).

[3] *Confess.* iii.3.6.

It was the unanimous verdict of contemporaries that the Blues and Greens fell squarely into this category, together with those other age-old misfits in city life, students.[1]

We may begin with Cassiodorus,[2] who remarks that the factions 'delight to abandon all serious thought' and engage in their 'futile struggles' (*inanes contentiones*) 'as though the safety of the nation were in danger' (*tamquam de statu periclitantis patriae laboretur*). Here is an experienced public servant actually making a joke of the idea that factional rivalry might have a serious basis. Compare from the third century Philostratus' remark[3] that 'many cities in Pamphylia and Cilicia were rioting over trifling public shows', adding that it was hard to calm down 'those who had got excited over pantomimes and race-horses'. According to Socrates,[4] the pogrom at Alexandria in 412 arose 'from no important reason, but because of that inveterate evil in all cities, pantomime-mania'. The same reaction to the same phenomenon down the centuries.

This same emphasis on the frivolity of faction activity is to be found most strikingly expressed in the memoirs of Menander Protector.[5] It was through boredom with his legal studies that Menander 'put serious things aside' (*τὰ σπουδαῖα παρεὶς*) and turned to what he bluntly calls 'the disorders (*θόρυβοι*) of the colours' (as though 'disorder' was their main *raison d'être*), which he carefully defines in terms of the races, the pantomime, and wrestling. It is to be noted that he did not think it worth mentioning which colour he supported. With this we may compare the contrast Agathias draws between soldiers and the factions, the factions being described as 'ignoble in all important matters, fierce and brave only for civil disturbances and the strife for the colours',[6] elsewhere again contrasting such 'pointless disturbances' (*ἀλόγους κινήσεις*) with 'something useful'.[7] Procopius too[8] ascribes the rivalry of the factions directly to

[1] On student violence (especially in the fourth century) see the evidence collected in *Cah. d'hist. mondiale* x (1967), 654, in particular the strict regulations for student behaviour laid down in *Cod. Theod.* xiv. 9.1 (of 370), which I forgot to cite there.

[2] *Variae* iii.51.11–12.

[3] *V. Apoll. Tyan.* 1.15.

[4] *HE* vii.31. Compare too Cassiodorus, *Var.* i.31.3, restricting pantomime performances 'ut omne semen discordiae funditus amputetur'.

[5] *Hist. frag.* 1 (=Suidas, s.v. *Μένανδρος*).

[6] v.14.4. [7] v.21.4. [8] *BP* i.24.2.

'these names [i.e. of the colours] and the seats which they occupy when they watch the games'. 'They care' he continues,

> neither for things divine nor human in comparison with conquering in these struggles . . . nay even when they are perhaps ill supplied with the necessities of life and when their fatherland is in the most pressing need and suffering unjustly, they pay no heed if only it is likely to go well with their 'faction' (*μέρος*).[1]

Later on, when describing their demand half-way through the Nika revolt for the deposition of John the Cappadocian and Tribonian, he remarks that[2]

> as long as the people were waging this war with each other on behalf of the names of the colours, no attention was paid to the offences of these men against the state; but once the factions had come to this mutual understanding and began the revolt, then they began to abuse them openly throughout the whole city.

The implication is that, except for this unique occasion when they joined forces, the rivalry of Blues and Greens *was* conceived exclusively in terms, not of this or that policy, but of the colours they wore—just like football fans today. It will be remembered (p. 203) that this is exactly how the younger Pliny had characterized the factional rivalry of his day ('suppose half-way through the race that the drivers were to change their colours . . .').

In Ch. V we saw that the Blues and Greens who helped defend Antioch in 540 were described by Procopius as 'those who used to fight each other *in the hippodromes*'.[3] At the end of his catalogue of Blue iniquities encouraged by Justinian, Procopius adds contemptuously that his uncle Justin I seemed totally unaware of what was going on, 'although he was an eye-witness at all times of what happened *in the hippodromes*'.[4] Compare too Procopius' comment on the women who joined the factions (sometimes on the opposite side from their menfolk!), 'although they never even went to the games'.[5] In each case the implication is that the games themselves were the normal focus of factional activity, even when the trouble subsequently spread to the streets. An epigram from the base to the great Anastasian charioteer Constantine ascribes the

[1] *BP* i.24.5. [2] *BP* i.24.17. [3] *BP* ii.8.17.
[4] *Anecd* viii.2. [5] *BP* i.24.6.

'friendly strife of the streets' directly to partisanship for and against Constantine.[1] Nothing had changed since the first and second centuries. Compare Dio Chrysostom's castigation of the hysteria of Alexandrian hippodrome fans:[2] 'at street corners and in alley-ways the malady continues throughout the entire city for several days'.

Over and above their generally unfavourable attitude to the factions, these texts present a remarkably uniform and consistent picture of the faction riot: it normally took place in or near the hippodrome or theatre, turned on nothing more profound than the colours, and was directly inspired by the excitement of the games themselves.

Now it might fairly be objected that these texts, though contemporary, represent opinions rather than facts—and mostly hostile, upper/middle-class opinions at that. The work of George Rudé has shown that upper-class writers can and all too often do get both the composition and the aims of popular movements completely wrong.[3] From the Roman world it will suffice to cite Tacitus and Ammianus, who write so contemptuously of the regrettable tendency of hungry mobs to riot. Is it possible, then, that Blue and Green riots really were genuine protests, misunderstood by the upper/middle-class writers who have come down to us?

There are two decisive objections to such a convenient way of avoiding the natural implications of our evidence. Firstly, we have already seen in Ch. VIII how regularly six centuries of officialdom traced theatrical violence as a matter of course directly to the incitement provided by the performance of the pantomimes, always with the same response: expulsion of dancers and closure of theatres. Whatever other factors may have been involved, it is clear that the diagnosis was correct and the cure effective. The violence itself invariably ceased until the pantomimes were recalled from banishment.

Take the theatre claques of Antioch. Although they came to use their power for political ends, they were in no sense political parties disguised as theatre claques. Like their successors the factions they always remained first and foremost partisans of the

[1] *Anth. Plan.* 364.3–4. [2] *Orat.* xxxii.42.

[3] See particularly *The Crowd in the French Revolution* (1959) and *The Crowd in History* (1964).

games. Libanius, writing of the problem of restraining their steadily increasing violence, traces it directly to the increasing influence over them of the pantomimes they supported ('the dancers take away their senses', being considerably more powerful than formerly, since they have so many ready to die for them').[1] For a sixth-century illustration we have Porphyrius' role in the great Antioch riot of 507. Particularly significant is the fact that, in an attempt to conciliate the factions early in the Nika revolt, Justinian offered them, not political concessions, but more races.[2] They refused, but it was not so naïve and irrelevant a proposition at such a moment as moderns would no doubt suppose, for after a serious riot in 520 with much loss of life, the factions assembled in the hippodrome and demanded, not (again) political concessions but—their favourite pantomimes.[3] Sixth-century emperors continued to see closure of theatres as the best solution to the problem (p. 226). Anastasius went furthest, and altogether banned both the pantomime and wild beast shows while at the same time increasing the rewards for successful charioteers. There can be little doubt that this was a concerted attempt to reduce factional violence by channelling their rivalry exclusively into the less violence-prone hippodrome. At all events, no faction riots are recorded while the measures remained in operation.[4]

The second objection to dismissing contemporary opinions as biased misrepresentations of faction activity is that these opinions are confirmed in every detail by the accounts of individual riots presented, without comment or interpretation, by the chroniclers.

In the first place, the chroniclers treat faction riots as a category all on their own. In the case of other sorts of riots there is always some indication of the cause or nature of the riots (reference to a famine, or a deposed bishop, for example). With faction riots this was evidently not felt necessary. Everybody knew why they happened. They were the natural escalation and culmination of faction rivalry, nothing more. The standard formula for a faction riot in the chronicles is *δημοτικὴ μάχη* or *συμβολή* (or on one occasion the curious but revealing

[1] *Or.* lvi.23. [2] Malalas, p. 474.
[3] Malalas, fr. 43, *Exc. de Insid.* p. 170.28f. (cf. *Porphyrius*, pp. 168f.).
[4] *Porphyrius*, pp. 228f.

technical term, a διμερές), that is to say a battle *between* the factions.[1] At the conclusion of a riot we will sometimes hear that 'the factions were reconciled' (ἐφιλιώθησαν τὰ μέρη).[2] And when (as usually happened) the imperial guards stepped in, it was to 'separate the factions' (χωρίσαι or παῦσαι τὰ μέρη).[3] This, not opposition to imperial policies or defence of democratic rights, is why the factions are so often found in conflict with the guards. As Procopius put it,[4]

> They fight against their opponents knowing not for what end they imperil themselves, but knowing well that, even if they overcome their enemy in the fight, the conclusion of the matter for them will be to be carried off straightway to the prison.

When a cause is given, it is seldom anything approaching what might be called political. The release of prisoners was a common issue, (498, 532, 563 in Constantinople)[5]—not political prisoners, but convicted rapists and murderers from their own number. In 514 and 550 riots followed when the emperor cancelled a race meeting.[6]

Vandalism, in the form of incendiarism, was a common and perhaps regular sequel to a faction riot. It is explicitly recorded of riots in 491, 493, 498, 507, 532, 548, 560 (twice at Constantinople and again in Cyzicus), and 561.[7] Once or twice it is the Praetorium or the house of a prefect that is burned,[8] but more often the incendiarism is apparently quite indiscriminate, taking in shops, churches, and public baths. The Nika rioters of 532 set fire to much of the city—hardly because they imagined it was going to cause Justinian to give way. Dio records a three-day battle between soldiers and the people some time in the 220s at Rome where it was the soldiers who

[1] Malalas, p. 492. [2] Malalas, *Exc. de Insid.* p. 170.28; cf. p. 175.26.
[3] Theophanes, p. 236.1; Malalas, p. 491. [4] *BP* i.24.3.
[5] Malalas, *Exc. de Insid.* p. 146.2f.; Mal. 484 with *frag. Tusc.* 4 (*PG* lxxxv.1820) and Theoph. p. 227.6 (where the negative is omitted).
[6] Jo. Ant. frag. 103, *Exc. de Insid.* p. 146; Malalas, frag. Tusc. 4 (*PG* lxxxv.1820B) and Theophanes, p. 226.33 (omitting the μή).
[7] 491–3: Marcellinus, *Chron.* s.a. (with Jo. Ant., *Exc. de Insid.* p. 141); 498: Malalas, *Exc. de Insid.* p. 168.22; 507: Malalas, p. 397 (at Antioch); 532, see below; 548: Malalas, p. 484, Theoph. p. 226.15f.; 560: Malalas, pp. 490–1; 561: Theophanes, pp. 235–6.
[8] The city prefect's house was always the first to be burned in riots at old Rome; cf. John Matthews, *Western Aristocracies and Imperial Court A.D. 364–425* (1974), 20, and add Sidonius, *Epp.* i.10.2.

won by setting fire to buildings ('and so the populace, fearing the whole city would be destroyed, reluctantly came to terms with them').[1] A riot in May 562 began with Blues attacking Greens on the way out from the hippodrome (presumably in a spirit of triumph—or disappointment—after the races; compare the great riot of 507 at Antioch inspired by the victories of Porphyrius[2]). Some fellow Blues from Sycae then set fire to the docks; contained here they set fire to a nearby church and then made their way to the main boulevard of the Mese, where they set fire to the house of the praetorian prefect and an entire neighbouring colonnade. Such seemingly pointless vandalism is one of the recurring features of hooliganism down the ages, taking the form of smashed telephone boxes and slashed train seats with the soccer hooligan of today. Some light on the spirit in which it was done during a riot of 561 is cast by the accompanying acclamations, soberly committed to paper for posterity by some faction clerk: 'Burn here, burn there, not a Blue anywhere . . .' (p. 91). It is easy to see, then, why one contemporary called the Greens 'citizen-burners' (*καυσοπολῖται*).[3]

Another small but suggestive common feature is that no fewer than three out of the twelve riots recorded at Constantinople during the reign of Justinian took place on 11 May at the Genethliaca, the games held in commemoration of the anniversary of the founding of the city, in 548, 556, and 562.[4] Simocatta records[5] that there was an earthquake on 11 May, 579 that caused 'even the circus maniacs (*τοὺς ἱπποµανοῦντας*) to recover their senses'. The Genethliaca were evidently more of an occasion, a cup-final rather than an ordinary league match. The Nika revolt grew out of the troubles which accompanied the special games held on the Ides of January. The connections here are too obvious to be a coincidence.

This, then, is the typical faction riot.[6] Now while it might be

[1] lxxx.2.3. [2] Malalas, pp. 395f.

[3] *Doctrina Jacobi*, p. 39.6 Bonwetsch.

[4] Malalas, p. 483, Theophanes, p. 226.15f.; Malalas, p. 488, Theophanes, p. 230; Malalas, p. 490–1 (held exceptionally on the 13th in 562).

[5] i.2.10.

[6] Contrast L. Bréhier's confident but wholly unjustified assertion: 'On constate que les querelles entre les dèmes n'ont jamais lieu à l'occasion des jeux . . . et que les émeutes de l'Hippodrome sont dirigées contre l'empereur par la faction dont il ne porte pas les couleurs' (*Les Institutions de l'empire byzantin* (1949), 198).

rash to insist that *all* faction activity was of this nature, the evidence so far assembled would seem to suggest that most was. So we will be justified in taking a rather closer and more critical look at the two great rebellions where a serious, political motive has been taken for granted, the Nika revolt and the civil war of 609–10.

Two special cases

The Nika revolt caused the destruction of much of the city and (on the lowest ancient estimate—even so probably far too high) 30,000 dead. It all but cost Justinian his throne and marked a turning-point in the reign. Beyond question it was in some sense the work of the factions. But how much was planned and how early the idea of replacing Justinian developed and whose idea it was, these are questions which do not admit of the clear-cut positive answers they usually receive. For example, we saw in Ch. VI that both evidence and probability are against the common assumption that religious motives played a part.

The affair began as an altogether typical faction riot.[1] Two partisans, one Blue and one Green, were to have been executed, but the execution itself was bungled and both men fell to the ground unharmed. Impressed by this obvious sign from heaven, their fellows rescued them by force and lodged them in the asylum of a nearby church. At the race-meeting of the Ides (13th) of January they begged Justinian to pardon the men, but he obstinately refused, even though they persevered up to the twenty-second race. At this Blues and Greens suddenly proclaimed 'Long life to the merciful Blues and Greens' and for the first time ever joined forces.

Next day (14th) Justinian tried to distract them by an offer of more games, but by now the 'merciful Blues and Greens' were busy burning and looting and killing. They had begun by going to the Praetorium and demanding that the city prefect Eudaemon should release the two prisoners. When he refused they broke into the Praetorium and freed all the prisoners

[1] For an analysis of the sources and establishment of the chronology see Bury, *JHS* xvii (1897), 92f., and Stein, *Bas-Empire* ii (1949), 449–56, with Martindale, 'Public Disorders', 31–6, 85–9. I do not believe that the dialogue between Justinian and the Greens translated and discussed in App. C has any direct connection with the revolt.

there, but after that their killing and burning seems to have been fairly indiscriminate (destroying part of the hippodrome even, and the Baths of Zeuxippus). Later that day they demanded the deposition of John the Cappadocian, Tribonian, and the city prefect Eudaemon; Justinian immediately agreed to this, but the rioting continued unabated for another three days. It was perhaps on the 16th that a crowd went to the house of Probus, a nephew of Anastasius, crying 'Probus for emperor of Rome', but on finding him out they set fire to it and moved on. It was not till the 18th that Hypatius and Pompeius, Anastasius' two other nephews (who had hitherto been closeted in the palace with Justinian), were approached, this time by a band of senators, and Hypatius proclaimed. Hypatius was taken to the hippodrome to be crowned, but at this point Belisarius intervened and the whole insurrection was crushed in a bath of blood.

Now it is not easy to detect much rhyme or reason to all this, much less a concerted and coherent plot by the Blues and Greens. Had their day-long protest about the prisoners been but a pretext to lead up to the protest against John, Tribonian, and Eudaemon next day, then it could very easily have been thwarted if either Justinian or Eudaemon had simply released the men (on the face of it Justinian must have seemed more likely to pardon two murderers than sacrifice his two senior ministers). Nor does it look as if the deposition of John, Tribonian, and Eudaemon was really a very central issue in any case, since Justinian's immediate capitulation made no difference to the rioting. There is much plausibility in the suggestion that it was agents of the senatorial element which was to become increasingly concerned in the affair that contrived to get the names of John and Tribonian added to that of Eudaemon. For it was the upper classes with whom John at least was unpopular; as an ostentatious circus partisan and fierce taxer of the rich he might have been expected to be popular with the people.[1] And they could hardly have had much contact at all with Tribonian, then fully occupied with the compilation of the *Corpus Iuris*.

According to the chronicler Marcellinus, the whole affair was a plot by senators to proclaim Hypatius and Pompeius. This

[1] p. 102.

can hardly be taken seriously,[1] not least because the proclamation was such a late development in a long-drawn-out riot which could easily have been stopped long before that stage (or never been allowed to start in the first place). But it does seem probable that in the end it was senators hostile to Justinian who decided to exploit the rapidly deteriorating situation while there was still time, and appoint a new emperor who could be expected to favour their interests more than Justinian.

It is surely impossible to believe that it was the Blues and Greens who had planned the removal of Justinian from the start. Their only visible aim on the 13th had been the release of the prisoners. It was not till the 14th that they turned against the two prefects and Tribonian, and if this had been intended as the first stage of a plot against Justinian, then it was a plot that he did thwart this time, by deposing all three. Their demands granted, the factions seem to have had no further objective, and simply abandoned themselves to rioting and burning for its own sake. It is likely in any case that the thousand or two actual partisans had by this stage lost the initiative in what had become a general riot. It was another four days before the proclamation of Hypatius, proof enough in itself that nothing had been planned in advance by anybody.

It was the Blues and Greens, for purely selfish reasons of their own, who plunged the city into chaos. For nearly a week Justinian shut himself up in his palace and did nothing while things went from bad to worse. The conviction must have been growing that, if Justinian was not going to act, before long somebody else would have to act for him. That is to say, the idea of replacing Justinian was not the cause of the riot; it was the consequence of his failure to deal with it. In the event he was able, at the last moment and at a terrible cost, to quell it and retrieve his position. Naturally enough it was on the senators who had 'plotted' against him that his retribution fell heaviest.

We pass now to the revolutions of the early seventh century. Undoubtedly the Blues and Greens did play a prominent part in the train of events that led to the fall of Maurice and then in turn to the fall of Phocas. Now in so far as their activity affected the destinies of two emperors, there is an obvious sense in which

[1] Bury (*JHS* 1897, pp. 92–3) rightly regards it as an 'official version'.

it *was* political. None the less, it is a very different matter to represent Maurice and Phocas as puppets in the hands of empire-wide political parties, who could make or break them by simply offering or withdrawing their support.

This interpretation sees everything in terms of a series of changed allegiances on the part of the factions,[1] it being taken for granted that only one colour could 'support' an emperor at any one time (H. Grégoire once went so far as to call the colour the emperor did not favour 'His Majesty's Opposition').

We have already seen that this view is mistaken. Maurice entrusted *both* factions with the task of guarding the walls for him, and both deserted together, following rather than leading public opinion, in the form of a violent demonstration against Maurice in the city which they themselves, still on the walls, cannot have started.[2] It was not till he had actually fled the city that the Greens turned to Phocas, and then it was the Blues as well as Greens who proclaimed him.[3]

Passing over the fairly trivial dispute over ceremonial the day after Phocas' coronation (p. 251), the next affair involving the factions is the Patrician Germanus' bid for the throne in 603. The Greens, gathered on the *cochlias*, responded by publicly defaming (ἐδυσφημοῦν) the Empress Constantina, whom, together with her three daughters, Germanus had contrived to transfer to the asylum of Saint Sophia. Evidently a Blue conspiracy, it has been assumed, which the Greens opposed through hostility to the Blue Germanus, or out of their lingering hostility to Maurice. This 'Blue conspiracy' is the purest guesswork; is it not simpler to infer that the Greens were anxious to dissociate themselves from Germanus' desperate and hopeless venture? Germanus' only claim to the purple was his connection with the imperial widow, and so the Greens substituted δυσφημίαι against her for the εὐφημίαι Germanus had been hoping for. Another example of the perversion of a ceremonial role for a political end, carefully performed at the *cochlias*, the staircase along which Phocas would have to pass to reach the hippodrome.[4]

[1] Y. Janssens, *Byz.* xi (1936), 499–536; A. N. Stratos, *Byzantium in the Seventh Century* i (1968), Chs. I–V.

[2] Simocatta, viii.8f. [3] p. 266, n.1.

[4] R. Guilland, *Études de topographie byzantine* i (1969), 499f.

The same year there was a big Green riot, with widespread destruction of all the area round the Mese.[1] This is usually represented as a Green 'insurrection' against Phocas, marking the moment when, for political reasons unknown, the Greens 'withdrew their allegiance' from Phocas. The indiscriminate arson points rather to a typical faction riot. If anything turned the Greens against Phocas at this time, it will have been his brutal handling of the riot (the Green demarch was burned alive). Even so, as late as 607 we find him threatening both demarchs with death,[2] so he can hardly have been going out of his way to 'court' the Blues instead. In 609 Phocas reacted with especial severity against some insults from the Greens, provoking more riots and arson, which he punished by depriving all Greens of public office.[3] It was surely this that was behind the Green hostility to him in 609–10.

Such evidence as there is hardly suggests that, during the greater part of his reign, Phocas either regularly supported or was supported by one colour rather than the other. When Heraclius' fleet drew near in 610 he sent both factions to man the harbours[4] just as Maurice had, and though in the event he was betrayed by the Greens, he would not have trusted them in the first place if it had been notorious that they were 'His Majesty's Opposition'.[5]

The participation of the factions in the virtual civil war that led up to Heraclius' accession in 610 is impressively attested, but its significance must not be exaggerated. It has been suggested, for example, that Heraclius senior in Carthage had concerted a plan with the 'leaders of the Greens' in Constantinople before his son set out.[6]

According to the *Miracula S. Demetrii*, there was civil war all

[1] *Chron. Pasch.* p. 695, with *Doctrina Jacobi*, p. 39 Bonwetsch. According to Janssens, the fact that it is the Greens who riot proves that the Blues were then enjoying Phocas' favour; according to Manojlović, when the Greens riot under Anastasius, or the Blues under Justinian, it is the rioters who enjoy the emperor's favour! There is slightly more to be said for the second view, but in most cases it is unlikely that this factor counted for anything.

[2] p. 253. [3] p. 254. [4] Jo. Ant. fr. 110, *Exc. de Insid.* p. 150.8f.

[5] Jarry (*Hérésies et factions*, 504), embarrassed by what he takes to be the 'confiance absurde' implied by this text, in violation of Greek usage and common sense translates John's words *ἐπιτρέπει φυλάττεσθαι ἐκ τῶν Πρασίνων τὸν λιμένα*, 'Phocas ordered the harbours to be guarded *against* the Greens'.

[6] e.g. Stratos. *Byz. in the Seventh Century* i.81.

over the empire, particularly in Thessalonica, Anatolia, Asia, Cilicia, and Palestine.[1] Paul the Deacon remarks more explicitly that 'in Phocas' reign the Blues and Greens engaged in civil war throughout the East and Egypt, *laying each other low in mutual slaughter*'.[2] Now there are several texts which bear out, not only the general point about widespread Blue and Green participation in the fighting, but also Paul's emphasis, namely that Blues and Greens were not so much fighting for or against Phocas or Heraclius as against each other.

Take Palestine, for example. 'In these days', wrote the monk 'Antiochus Strategos',[3]

> there arrived certain wicked men who settled in Jerusalem . . . They were named after the dress which they wore, and one faction was dubbed the Greens and the other the Blues. They were full of a villainy, and were not content with merely assaulting and plundering the faithful, but were banded together for bloodshed as well and for homicide. *There was war and extermination ever among them* and they constantly committed evil deeds, even against the inhabitants of Jerusalem.

Sometimes the general confusion gave ordinary people an opportunity for revenge. At Rhodes, for example, some sailmakers (enthusiastically aided by Jacob the Jew) laid into Blues 'fleeing from the East',[4] evidently getting their own back for all they had suffered from the Blues in the past. Elsewhere, in order to get his own back on Christians, the enterprising Jacob posed as a member of whichever of the colours happened to be in the ascendant there and beat up members of the other. The implication is clear that it was the rivalry between Blues and Greens rather than Phocas and Heraclius that he was exploiting. The mutilated faction inscriptions of the period point in the same direction.[5] Thirty years later we find Blues and Greens exploiting the chaos that followed the Arab invasion in the same way.[6]

[1] *PG* cxvi.1262. [2] *HL* iv.36.

[3] *EHR* 1910, 503. Janssens (*Byz.* 1936, 533) wrongly referred this text to 614, but in fact the arrival of the factions at Jerusalem is clearly dated *before* the Persian invasion ('*Then* God sent the Persian . . .).

[4] *Doctrina Jacobi*, p. 89.25.

[5] Assembled by Janssens, *Byz.* 1936, 526–7; add the example from Aphrodisias quoted below, p. 315.

[6] John of Nikiu, §118.3.

There was no ideological gulf between them nor even any genuine loyalty to Heraclius on the one side or Phocas on the other. At one point, according to the full and detailed account of the Egyptian theatre in John of Nikiu, the Blues, usually the allies of Phocas' lieutenant Bonosus, gave every assistance to Heraclius' cousin Nicetas during his occupation of Alexandria.[1] No doubt it did not last long. John continues as follows: '*taking advantage of the war between Bonosus and Nicetas*, the Greens of Egypt arose and perpetrated outrages on the Blues, and gave themselves shamelessly to pillage and murder.'[2] Nicetas had both parties arrested to restore order. It does not look as if either protagonist in the war derived much reliable help from the factions. Their battles in 609/10 were little more than their traditional rivalry writ large. So far from the colours being a façade for political conflict, on the contrary the political conflict became a convenient façade for the colours to fight each other openly and with impunity.

The factions feature prominently in John of Antioch's account of Heraclius' capture of Constantinople.[3] Some Greens rescued Heraclius' mother and wife from the monastery where Phocas had been holding them hostages, and others set fire to the harbour of Caesarius, which they were supposed to be guarding, and fought a skirmish with Bonosus' guards. Yet how militarily or politically significant was the role of the Greens? It was a band of senators who entered the palace, seized Phocas, and took him out in a boat to Heraclius' flagship.[4]

Interestingly enough the accounts of Theophanes and the contemporary *Paschal Chronicle* say nothing about any such Green contribution to Heraclius' victory.[5] This has been held a serious omission on their part.[6] But might it not be that in fact they show a better sense of proportion than John, like Malalas an ardent follower of the colours and ever ready to record their

[1] John of Nikiu, §108–14.

[2] §108.16 (a text whose significance could not be appreciated in Charles's mistaken translation: see p. 83).

[3] Fr. 110, *Exc. de Insid.* p. 150.

[4] Stratos, *Byz. in the Seventh Century* i.90. New evidence has now revealed that Phocas' brother Comentiolos, presumably *magister militum* of the East, held out in Asia Minor for a while even after Phocas' death: cf. W. E. Kaegi, *BZ* 1973, 308f.

[5] Theophanes, p. 299, *Chron. Pasch.* pp. 700–1.

[6] Maricq, *BARB* xxxv (1949), 74.

deeds and sayings? Heraclius was no doubt delighted to get his womenfolk back safe, but in other respects the Green contribution may really have been of rather peripheral significance. In one matter John's account is actually contradicted by the Paschal Chronicler, who claims that it was Bonosus, not the Greens, who set fire to the harbour of Caesarius.

There is no need (or justification) to minimize the role of the factions in the conflict. Their bitter fighting all over the eastern provinces was real enough. A Blue was automatically considered an 'emperor's man' (*εὐνοϊτὴς βασιλέως*),[1] and the names of Phocas and Heraclius were added after the colour they supported on factional graffiti. We know that Greens swelled Heraclius' fleet as it sailed to the capital[2] and after his victory he had the Blue flag solemnly burned in the hippodrome.[3] But the notion that he had concerted operations with the Greens from the start is absurd.[4] Both colours appear throughout as irresponsible and unreliable strong-arm men rather than political parties. Their real contribution to Heraclius' coup was very different. By exploiting as they did the disorder and chaos of Phocas' last two years for their own personal ends they further aggravated the situation, underlining at once Phocas' incapacity to rule and the need for a saviour. When the saviour appeared, characteristically they exploited this situation too in terms of their own rivalry.

Official reactions

So faction riots do not take us very far in our quest for the facts behind the sentimental modern picture of Blues and Greens gallantly standing up to the emperor in the interests of the underprivileged. Let us turn then to the protests and dialogues with the emperor for which they have become so famous. A study of the evidence will reveal that, contrary to the general assumption, Byzantine emperors paid remarkably little attention to petitions from the factions.

[1] *Doctrina Jacobi*, p. 39.8. [2] John of Nikiu, §109.25, cf. 107.46.

[3] *Chron. Pasch.* p. 701. The significance of this action has been greatly overrated. It symbolizes the humiliation of the Blues, to be sure, but it would be a very trifling punishment for the sort of role modern scholars have imagined for them in the rebellion as a whole.

[4] e.g. Stratos, op. cit. p. 81.

In 498 Anastasius angrily rejected an appeal[1] for the release of some Greens arrested for stone-throwing and sent in troops to quell the protesters. It was Justinian's similarly negative response to the request for the release of Blue and Green malefactors in January 532 that started the Nika revolt.

Two prima facie more favourable examples of faction protests under Justinian deserve rather fuller mention. In 556 there was a corn and barley shortage at Constantinople which happened to coincide with the visit of an ambassador from Persia. There was a demonstration at the games by 'men', as a result of which 'some of the leading men of the Blue faction were arrested and punished'.[2] The Blues certainly appear in a less anti-social light here, but we do not know whether they started the protest (or, if so, why) nor whether this was the only reason they were arrested. In any case, Justinian had no intention of being embarrassed in front of the Persian ambassador and stood firm.

Then there is Procopius' account of an incident at Tarsus early in the reign.[3] Malthanes the governor of Cilicia discovered that he got his taxes in better if he used troops. Most people put up with this, but the Blues of Tarsus, 'being bold in the licence which the emperor's favour gave them, heaped many insults upon Malthanes in the public market-place when he was not present among them' (a classic example of a claque chanting formal *δυσφημίαι*). Malthanes was furious and marched straight to Tarsus, where there was a confused night battle with many casualties, including a local councillor who happened to be a Blue patron.

Malthanes may have been acting beyond his powers, yet the Blues did not act out of any such acknowledged right to utter public criticism of their governor as modern scholars suppose, but because they felt sure that Justinian would back them simply because they were Blues. At first he was indeed angry at their treatment, but let the matter drop on receipt of a large bag of gold from Malthanes' father-in-law Leo. When Malthanes next visited Constantinople the Blues there set upon him, evidently at the instigation of their fellows in Tarsus. And

[1] Malalas' words, *παρεκαλοῦν τὸν βασίλεα . . . καὶ οὐ παρεκλήθη ὑπὸ τοῦ δήμου ὁ αὐτὸς βασιλεύς, ἀλλ' ἀγανακτήσας . . .*, show that it was indeed a formal appeal from the Greens that Anastasius rejected so intemperately.

[2] Malalas, p. 488, Theophanes, A.M. 6048. [3] *Anecd.* xxix. 28f.

they would have killed him, says Procopius, if some of their number had not also received gold from Leo. Procopius rightly concludes that it was not an affair that brought credit on any of the parties involved.

The notorious dialogue between Justinian (via his mandator) and the Greens which Theophanes mistakenly connects with the Nika revolt has often been quoted as a classic example of a Byzantine emperor being 'forced to negotiate' with a faction. In fact it proves the very reverse. The two most striking features of the dialogue are that the Green complaints are entirely restricted to alleged injuries suffered by themselves, and that the emperor dismisses them with impatience and contempt.

In 601, scared by the revolt of Phocas, Maurice called a race meeting in order to solicit the reassurance of the factions. Both duly chanted their loyal acclamations, but the Greens took the opportunity of complaining about two officials, Constantine and Domentziolus, who were causing them trouble.[1] Maurice might have been well advised to oblige them under the circumstances, though the fact that later in the year the Greens are found burning Constantine's house suggests that perhaps he did not.[2] Enough has already been said of Phocas in this context (p. 253). The Green demonstration against Constantina was no true demonstration, but a cowardly device for dissociating themselves from Germanus' plot and will no doubt have gone down very well. Blues and Greens combined protested at Heraclius' incestuous second marriage to his niece Martina, to no avail.[3]

When the material is put together like this, it becomes clear that Byzantine emperors did *not* pay the respect to petitions from the factions they are popularly imagined to have paid. Nor is it simply a question of the greater arrogance and remoteness of the Byzantine autocrat, disdaining the protests of his people. In the light of these examples it is easy enough to see why Byzantine emperors were less responsive to faction demands than their predecessors had been to circus petitions in earlier centuries.

(a) Unlike (say) the demonstrations organized in anonymity

[1] Simocatta, viii.7.9, Theophanes, p. 287; for the acclamations, below p. 332.

[2] Simocatta, viii.9.5, Theophanes, p. 288 (Constantine was evidently a close friend of Maurice, cf. Simocatta, viii.9.12).

[3] Nicephorus, *Brev.* p. 14 de Boor, with the text as established in App. F.

by the Antioch claque, Blue and Green demonstrations were only too obviously the work of Blues and Greens, dressed as they were in their Blue and Green jackets and sitting in the Blue and Green grandstands. Thus they could never pass themselves off as 'the people', and if (as must often have been the case) their petitions had little or no popular backing, that too must have been obvious.

(b) Almost all the petitions and demonstrations chronicled above have one thing in common: a narrow concern with purely factional interests. Few emperors were likely to be willing to release a convicted murderer just because he was a Blue or punish a government official just because he happened to have offended the Greens.

(c) There is every indication that the factions were far from popular with the general public. Time and again we read of shops, churches, and baths (not to mention private houses) destroyed by their frequent and indiscriminate arson. And many sources describe the fear in which ordinary citizens lived of their violence, notably Procopius[1] for the beginning and Malalas for the end of Justinian's reign.[2] Thus no emperor was going to win himself general popularity by yielding to unjustifiable faction demands.

And yet it has been claimed that the factions had *special* claims on the emperor's consideration; not moral claims but specific constitutional rights. The evidence on which this view is based are the statements in Malalas[3] that Marcian forbad the Greens πολιτεύεσθαι . . . μήτε στρατεύεσθαι and Theophanes that Phocas likewise forbad the Greens πολιτεύεσθαι.[4]

What does πολιτεύεσθαι mean? To 'engage in the political life of the state', it has been argued.[5] But quite apart from the fact that no parallel can be produced for such a sense, what could it mean in any case? The only relevant right which the Greens, together with the Blues and every other citizen of Constantinople possessed, was to raise their voices in protest sufficiently forcibly to influence the emperor or his representatives. And this was only a right in the sense that nobody could

[1] *Anecd.* vii, *passim.* [2] Fr. 51, *Exc. de Insid.* p. 176.16.
[3] Malalas, p. 368.15. [4] Theophanes, p. 297.4.
[5] H.-G. Beck, *Senat und Volk von Konstantinopel* (Sitzungsber. München 1966), 49; cf. too his definition in *BZ* 1965, 41, n.80: 'πολιτεύεσθαι ist terminus technicus für die tätigkeit der Demen im öffentlichen Leben'.

very well stop them shouting (if they went further than this they could and would be stopped).

How could a 'right' such as this be suspended for one section of the population for a limited period? After particularly bad riots the emperor did occasionally close the hippodrome, thus preventing large assemblies and in effect suspending it for the whole population. It would obviously be absurd to bar the Greens from the hippodromes (what would happen to the races?) nor would *μὴ πολιτεύεσθαι* be a very natural way of expressing this.

No. *πολιτεύεσθαι* must bear here, especially in association with *στρατεύεσθαι*, a meaning which can be amply substantiated from other similar bans (most in practice, if not in intention, temporary): 'to hold public office'. Theodosius I's praetorian prefect Rufinus laid such a ban on Lycians (because his predecessor had packed the administration with Lycians).[1] Pagans were barred from office time and again (first under Honorius in 408), and before long Jews, Samaritans, and heretics were added to the list. Justinian's laws are particularly comprehensive in this respect. The words most commonly used are *militia*, *στρατεία* and *στρατεύεσθαι* (an abundantly documented metaphor for the civil service).[2] *πολιτεύεσθαι* does not appear in legal sources, but two literary sources use it—the same two that refer to the ban on the Greens. Both Malalas and Theophanes represent Justinian's law of 529 (*CJ* i.5.18.4) as banning pagans (Theophanes adds heretics) *πολιτεύεσθαι*.[3] We know from the text of the law itself that it banned pagans and heretics from public service (*μήτε στρατεύεσθαι μήτε τινὸς ἀξιώματος ἀπολαύειν*).

So all that Marcian and Phocas did was to resort to that well-tried and no doubt highly effective punishment, exclusion from the imperial service, carrying as it did that most precious of all commodities to the Byzantine, rank and title. This was how Justinian used to reward his favourites among the Blues.[4]

[1] See *Claudian* (1970), 81–2.

[2] e.g. *Cod. Theod.* xvi.5.42 (of 408), cf. Zosimus, v.46.3; *Cod. Just.* i.5.8.6 (Marcian); ibid. i.5.12.9 (527). No reference here to a 'deme-militia'.

[3] Mal. p. 449.3, Theoph. p. 180.18. After the Samaritan revolt of 484 the well-to-do had their property confiscated and were forbidden *στρατεύεσθαι* (Mal. p. 383).

[4] Procopius, *Anecd.* vii.24. It was no doubt because the Greens had been enjoying similar privileges under Theodosius II and his chamberlain Chrysaphius (a patron of the Greens, Malalas 368), that Marcian issued his ban.

The religious factor

Faction protests and riot were undeniably frequent. But their number has been mistakenly augmented by two false assumptions: (a) that every mention of 'demes' is a reference to the factions (Ch. II), and (b) that all religious disturbances are faction disturbances (Ch. VI)—whence the common impression that *all* protests and riots in the late Empire were the work of the factions. This is very far from being the case. The factions enjoyed no monopoly in either.

The category of riots about which we have most information throughout this period is the religious. Within only a year or two of the death of Constantine elections to bishoprics could be counted on to divide a city. There was a series of religious riots at Constantinople in 338, 342, 344, 345, and 359, with 3,150 lives allegedly lost in 345.[1] There were to be many more all over the eastern provinces in the fifth and sixth centuries.

The great age of monastic violence was the fifth century, though we find monks active already by the late fourth.[2] One band threw stones at Gregory Nazianzen in 379, another at John Chrysostom in 403; their burning of pagan shrines and synagogues was causing imperial concern well before the turn of the century. The patriarchs, especially Theophilus of Alexandria and his successors Cyril and Dioscorus, made open use of monks as stormtroopers, and they were particularly active at the two councils of Ephesus, in 431 and 449. As a consequence, the fourth canon of the Council of Chalcedon in 451 sharply attacks those for whom monastic life is merely a pretext, who pass from city to city and 'cause trouble in the churches and in public affairs'. But such condemnations had little effect. Monks were heavily involved in demonstrations and riots arising from Anastasius' religious policy, notably at Constantinople in 510 and 512 and Antioch in 512.

Many more examples and types of religious disturbance could easily be quoted, but it is enough to have made the general point, which is clear and undisputed. In the behaviour of the

[1] See Martindale, 'Public Disorders', 21–2; Socr. ii.16 for the 3,150.

[2] See in general H. Bacht, 'Die Rolle des orientalischen Mönchtums in den kirchenpolitischen Auseinandersetzungen um Chalcedon (431–519)', in *Das Konzil von Chalcedon* ii (1953), 193f., and G. Dagron, 'Le Monachisme à Constantinople jusqu'au concile de Chalcédoine', *Travaux et Mémoires* iv (1970), 229f.

monks of the early fifth century we find already most of the stock features of the later faction riot: burning, stone throwing, use of formal intimidation and general violence.

It was the monks, not the factions, who elevated urban violence into one of the major problems of the late Roman world. Above all, perhaps, it was the monks who accustomed both the inhabitants and the authorities of late Roman cities almost to expect a certain level of violence during popular disorders.[1]

So the factions did not either initiate or even dominate the sort of violent behaviour for which they became so conspicuous. They merely indulged in it for its own sake, in pursuance of their own petty and pointless rivalries.

But there is another consideration more relevant still to the notion of the factions as emergent political parties. It was the religious conflicts of the post-Constantinian age, not factional rivalry, that reintroduced politics into the Roman world. Questions such as the succession to a disputed see or what formulation of the creed would be arrived at by this or that council were genuinely political issues. For the first time (except for the case of the Jews) Roman emperors found that they could not simply impose their will—not even by force. They had to be prepared to bargain—and lose. The outcome of the Council of Chalcedon was the most far-reaching political decision taken in the Roman empire since the foundation of Constantinople. Yet it was not a decision taken by a Roman emperor. And in the two centuries that remained before the Arab conquests, no Roman emperor was able to undo its consequences.

Inter-city rivalry had always been a striking feature of the Greco-Roman world. But none of the feuds of the early Empire could match the rivalry between the great eastern patriarchates in the fifth and sixth centuries. Internal rivalry (*στάσις*) was likewise an age-old feature of ancient city life. Here again nothing, certainly not factional rivalry, could divide a city as effectively and bitterly as religious schism. The factions could be

[1] It was likewise the monks rather than the factions who could claim to be protectors of the oppressed and to enjoy a tolerated freedom of speech: W. H. C. Frend, *Past and Present* liv (1972), 21. And in 502 it was monks, not factions, who manned the walls of Amida against the Persians (ibid. 8).

and in the end always were suppressed by force; no amount of compulsion could make divided congregations accept the same bishop or creed.

But for all the obvious differences in intention and seriousness between religious protests and faction riots, there is bound to have been some interaction between them. The monks did not grow up in a vacuum any more than the factions. Naturally enough they tended to make use of the traditional machinery and opportunities for expressing their protests. As early as the third century the supporters of Paul of Samosata, bishop of Antioch, were accused of employing the tactics of theatre gangs.[1] By the fifth century the monks made use of formal *εὐφημίαι* and *δυσφημίαι* no less than the theatre claques who had evolved the practice. And what more appropriate place to present protests aimed at (locally) the governor or (in Constantinople) the emperor than the theatre or circus?

The most striking example comes from the recently published ancient life of Marcellus, abbot of the monastery of the 'Sleepless Ones'.[2] When Leo I gave Aspar's son Patricius the title Caesar and then proposed to make him his son-in-law, the clergy and people alike were very anxious at the prospect of an Arian German as heir apparent. A demonstration in the hippodrome was led jointly by the patriarch Gennadius with his clergy and Marcellus with his monks. With Marcellus as spokesman a dialogue with the emperor took place in the traditional manner. Had the story been recorded instead as a bald entry in a chronicle (e.g. *ἐγένετο στάσις δημοτικὴ περὶ Πατρικίου τοῦ καίσαρος ἀρειανοῦ . . .*), who would not have assumed that it was a factional demonstration and taken it as proof of their concern for religious issues?

On the other hand, as good Christians (or just for the excitement), faction members are bound on occasions to have taken part in religious protests. The only case we know of is when both Blues and Greens took part in the great demonstration against Anastasius in 512. But they are mentioned here not as ringleaders (the implication of Victor's account[3] is that they

[1] Eusebius, *HE* vii.30.9.

[2] *Vie ancienne de saint Marcel l'acémète* § 34, ed. G. Dagron, *Anal. Boll.* lxxxvi (1968), pp. 316–18 (probably dating from the mid sixth century, Dagron, p. 279).

[3] See p. 132.

did not join in at the beginning), but because their surprising co-operation well illustrated the unanimity and solidity of the people against Anastasius. It was they, Victor adds, who followed up vocal warfare by setting fire to buildings—a neat example of the factions importing the techniques of their own riots into what had begun as a serious religious demonstration.

The function of the faction riot

The political importance of the factions has for so long been taken for granted that, were it not so obviously true, it might seem merely perverse to suggest that their real importance lay precisely in the fact that they were *not* political.

The people were always ready enough to deliver their petitions and register their protests at the games. But the main reason they went was beyond question to watch and enjoy the games themselves. The man in the Roman street positively lived for the thrill of circus and theatre. It is easy now to smile at the conviction of Christian moralists that the circus and theatre were 'houses of Satan', but in their terms they were quite right to be disturbed at the almost religious fervour with which their congregations abandoned everything for the games. Did they not consult astrologers and sorcerers, and solemnly invoke the powers of darkness to give a pantomime the cramps or break the leg of the rival charioteer's lead horse?[1]

Football, as a character in Aldous Huxley's *Eyeless in Gaza* justly observed, is more important than politics. The same was true of the Roman circus. If the Greens lose, sighed Juvenal bitterly,[2] you will see the city dumbstruck with grief as though in the hour of Cannae. Mens' minds were certainly not on politics at such a moment.

But there is also a sense in which this non-political quality in football (and the Roman circus) can itself become a political factor, as a distraction and an exploitable focus of patriotism, especially in those very Latin American countries of which Huxley was writing. In Brazil, for example, the military junta associated itself closely with the success of its World Cup winning team of 1970 and fêted them extravagantly.[3] Their star player Pele—echoing the words of the pantomime Pylades

[1] *Porphyrius*, p. 245. [2] *Sat.* xi.199–201.

[3] I am much indebted here to some unpublished research by Ian Taylor.

to Augustus—admitted that the victory would do much to strengthen the junta by distracting the people from pressing social problems. Roman emperors likewise extracted the maximum possible capital from their own public appearances at the games—and (like modern politicians, and for the same reasons) often tended to associate with star performers in private. It may indeed be more than a coincidence that Latin America has become as notorious as Rome for the violence of its sports fans. The military juntas, ever fearful of revolution, know that soccer hooligans are the least of their worries, and tolerate them as a harmless distraction.

Roman emperors had always tolerated a relatively high level of public disorder,[1] and some seem to have positively encouraged the rivalries of the games by their own flagrant partisanships. Nero deliberately incited theatre fans to violence, offering prizes and pardons (*fautores histrionum velut in proelia convertit impunitate et praemiis*) and even withdrawing the praetorian cohort that had till then kept at least some measure of order.[2]

Of course theatre fans were always liable to get altogether out of hand, and even a Nero had in the end to resort to the stern measures of Tiberius. But however often it was banned, the pantomime always came back. After a while the emperor always relented. Even after the horrors of the Nika revolt the hippodrome was functioning again as normal within five years.[3]

Emperors were evidently unwilling to deprive the whole people of entertainments that were abused by only a minority. It was not fair—and it was not wise either. Sooner or later the pantomime usually led to trouble, but in the meanwhile it gave a great deal of pleasure and much-needed excitement to the great majority of respectable law-abiding citizens. If they were deprived for too long of the opportunity to leave behind them for a few hours the dreary and oppressive realities of their everyday lives, they might begin to think that something could or should be done about them. *This* is why they had to be allowed to go to the games, to 'drive away their cares' as Cassiodorus put it in an interesting essay on the circus.[4] For a few days at least everyone would be talking about the last great

[1] See p. 184. [2] Tacitus, *Ann.* xiii.25.4.
[3] Stein, *Bas-Empire* ii (1949), 455, n.1. [4] *Variae* iii.51, cf. i.31.

victory of Scorpus or Porphyrius instead of grumbling about the price of corn.

This is surely why, despite the trouble they caused, the Blues and Greens of the late Empire were *allowed* to continue. I say 'allowed' because (as we have seen) it is clear that the emperors could and often did suppress their activities by the simple device of closing down the only bases they had to operate from, the theatres and circuses. But this entailed depriving the rest of the citizen body as well, and after a suitable interval the arenas were opened again, in the hope that all would be quiet but in the more realistic expectation that sooner or later more riots, and more closures, would follow.

Now no emperor would have been content with such short-term measures against the recurrence of factional violence if the factions had been in any sense independent political parties, still less parties in any way opposed to himself. The risk was taken because faction riots, though a nuisance (and sometimes worse), were so obviously *non*-political. The typical faction riot was not a protest, it was a battle *between* the two colours; it was not the sort of disturbance that was likely to incite the people at large to join in, much less protest about political issues. On the contrary. So far were the factions from being anti-imperial that, in virtue of their ceremonial role, they might more properly be described as an extension of the emperor's court. When not indulging their high spirits against each other, they were the most conspicuous and vocally loyal of his subjects. Indeed it was the emperor who first extended their official activities beyond the walls of the hippodrome, into the ceremonial of the palace itself. This is why emperors such as Maurice and Phocas called upon the factions (both, of course) to man the walls when the throne was in danger; not because they were a recognized citizen militia but because, when support was falling away on all sides, emperors naturally looked to the factions as last-ditch loyalists.

It is clear enough from the evidence here collected that there *is* a direct connection between the games and faction misbehaviour, just as there is between the football stadium and soccer hooliganism today. But in neither case is the violence to be explained *solely* in terms of the excitement generated by the dancers or

footballers. Other factors are certainly involved. In both cases there is undoubtedly a ritual element, the 'ritual violence' which a social anthropologist has recently claimed as a typical feature of the phenomenon of what he calls 'male bonding'.[1] The games can serve as a field where the youth who lives an otherwise ordinary and unexciting life can prove himself a man by fighting and destroying, hunting in a pack with his peers; for an hour or two he can be an object of fear to all who cross his path. The problems and anxieties that dog his everyday life will be dissipated in the excitement. The riot can actually serve a cathartic function.

This means that, even when faction riots coincided with moments of famine or political uncertainty, more often than not they probably served to diminish rather than heighten the social and political tensions of the situation. It must surely have been as true in Justinian's day as it had been in Martial's, that if guests were beginning to tread on delicate ground, the prudent host would do well to divert them from politics on to that safest of all subjects, the circus:[2]

> de Prasino conviva meus Venetoque loquatur,
> nec faciunt quemquam pocula nostra reum.

[1] Lionel Tiger, *Men in Groups* (1969); for the application to soccer hooliganism see Peter Marsh, 'Understanding Aggro', *New Society* 3 Apr. 1975, pp. 7–9, and for a much earlier period, Natalie Zemon Davis, 'The Reasons of Misrule: Youth Groups and Charivaris in Sixteenth Century France', *Past and Present* 1 (1971), 41–75.

[2] Martial, x.48.23–4.

XI. The Decline of the Factions

STUDIES of the factions usually conclude with a section on their decline, which is attributed to some reforming emperor, variously identified as Heraclius or Leo III, who stripped them of all their powers with the consolation of a role in imperial ceremonial.

Now if the arguments adduced in the preceding chapters have any validity, the powers of which the factions were allegedly stripped (above all the 'political' rights and the control of public entertainments) were powers that they had never possessed. The only significant formal role they played during the period of their greatest violence (late fifth to early seventh century) was the one they were allegedly first given by this reforming emperor: their role in imperial ceremonial (Ch. IX).

Indeed, the very idea of a 'decline' so conceived is more hypothesis than fact, based in part on the lack of evidence for violent factional activity in the period from Heraclius on and in part on a misapprehension of its nature and purpose before then.

It was not because of any specific powers that could be won or taken away that the factions were so prone to lapse into violence before Heraclius. Even then they *could* be controlled. The emperors who had the most trouble (Anastasius, Justinian, Phocas) were those who relied on punitive rather than preventive measures, occasional ferocity rather than consistent firmness, the use of mailed cavalry once a riot had started rather than a regular police force to stop things getting out of hand in the first place. Justin II issued a stern warning to both colours that he would stand no nonsense from either,[1] and he got none.

Heraclius was favourite for the title 'hammer of the demes' until attention was drawn to their role in the coups of Leontius

[1] 'To the Blues, "for you the emperor Justinian is dead" and to the Greens "for you the emperor Justinian still lives"' (Theophanes, p. 243.6f.).

and Tiberius Apsimar in, respectively, 695 and 698. No decline at all could now be allowed till at least *c.* 700, by when we still find the factions in 'toute leur vitalité'.[1] The silence of the sources between 610 and 700 now had to be explained away. A. Maricq argued that the silence was only apparent, a reflection of sources uninterested in the factions, pointing out that it was in 610 that John of Antioch closed his chronicle. This is in fact a better argument than it might appear.

But for John of Antioch and John Malalas (who closed in 565) we should know next to nothing about faction riots under Anastasius and Justinian. Up to 610 Theophanes records a fair amount of information about the factions, most if not all of it straight from one or other of the two Johns; thereafter nothing. This must certainly be a consequence of his sources. Yet why should those sources, the successors of such popular and influential chronicles as the two Johns, have deviated from their practice and suppressed all mention of the factions if they had been continuing to cause as much trouble as before?

It seems to me that, while the silence of the sources does not warrant the assumption of a sudden suppression of faction activity in 610 or soon after, on the other hand we can hardly just ignore the sources of 85 years and assume regardless that the factions continued in 'toute leur vitalité' from 610 to 695.

The debate has been wrongly conceived. It is not a simple question of decline, defined in terms of loss of rights or powers, whether in the seventh century or later. In the terms of their one and only official role, in imperial ceremonial, they became not less but more important as time passed.

Now the evidence collected above (pp. 249–270) suggests that the ceremonial role of the factions was substantially expanded and codified in the last decades of the sixth century, and in particular during the reign of Heraclius. For a long time it was clearly quite possible for these ceremonial functions to coexist happily enough with the traditional rivalry and rowdiness of the factions. A passage of John Moschus neatly illustrates the passage from one to the other (p. 247). But as the ceremonial became increasingly important, and was performed increasingly in the palace and in churches, far from the excitement of the

[1] A. Maricq, *BARB* xxxv (1949), 67.

games, inevitably the rowdyism will have tended to become less prominent.

So perhaps there is a connection after all between the probability of some measure of decline in faction rioting and the undeniable growth of the ceremonial role of the factions. Not, however, the substitution of a ceremonial role for political power by a reforming emperor. The truth is surely that it was not what they lost but what they gained that inhibited faction violence. As the role of the Blues and Greens in the ceremonial of court and hippodrome grew in importance, so did the Blues and Greens themselves. They were not prevented from rioting; as time passed they simply became too grand for it.

Let us return now to the role of the factions in the coups of Leontius and Tiberius Apsimar. As we saw in Ch. IX, in neither case was it a question of massed Blue and Green armies imposing a new emperor by the sword. In both cases the factions were simply acting out (no doubt for a suitable reward) their all-important role in the imperial coronation ceremony. Their participation in imperial coronations continued throughout the seventh century; miserable as our sources are for the reign of Heraclius, the presence of the factions is explicitly recorded at the coronation of the infant Constantine III, Heraclius II, and the Caesar David (p. 256). Naturally in all these cases their role was purely formal, since all three were crowned by Heraclius himself. But the deposition of Justinian II by Leontius marked the end of the dynasty, the first time since the accession of Heraclius that a new ruler had really needed the legitimization of popular recognition.

It is instructive to compare the transmission of power within the dynasty after Heraclius' death in 641[1]. He was succeeded jointly by his two sons (by different wives) Constantine III and Heraclius II. Constantine III died after only three months, whereupon the unpopular empress Martina seized power jointly with her son Heraclius II. There was fierce opposition from all quarters, and Heraclius II was forced to crown Heraclius (subsequently known as Constans II), son of the

[1] For full discussion see Stratos, *Byzantium in the Seventh Century* ii (1972), 175–204.

popular Constantine III[1]. Despite this, however, both he and his mother were soon deposed by the Senate, who recognized Constans II as sole Augustus. Now while there were extensive popular demonstrations against Martina and her son, the factions are never mentioned. No doubt some individual Blues and Greens took part, but they do not appear to have taken any initiative *as factions*. It was unquestionably the Senate that took all the decisive moves[2]. Dethroning a legitimate emperor was a very different thing from assisting at the coronation of successful usurpers.

A damaged inscription of the period[3] has often been drawn into this connection:

νικᾷ ἡ τύχη
Κωνσταντίνου τοῦ θεο-
φυλάκτου ἡμῶν δεσπότου
* * * * * *

The nature of the erased words can be inferred with some probability from another Constantinopolitan inscription of the same period:[4]

νικᾷ ἡ τύχη Κωνσταντίνου μεγάλου
βασίλεως τοῦ συστατικοῦ νικητοῦ
καὶ Βενέτων τῶν εὐνοούντων.

We should probably supplement *καὶ τῶν Βενέτων* (Grégoire)[5] or *καὶ τῶν Πρασίνων* (Dölger,[6] Jarry[7]): 'Long live the fortune of our God-protected lord Constantine and the Blues (or Greens).' There is no way of telling which (nor does it much matter), since we do not know whether both inscriptions refer to the same Constantine.

Some faction graffiti from Ephesus and Aphrodisias where the names of the colours have been erased or even replaced by

[1] He also crowned his brother David under the name Tiberius; David-Tiberius was deposed together with Heraclius II and Martina.

[2] On the senatorial initiative see Stratos, pp. 203–5 and Ostrogorsky, *History of the Byzantine State*[2] (1968), 113–14.

[3] *CIG* iv.8789 = B. Meyer-Plath and A. M. Schneider, *Die Landmauer von Konstantinopel* ii (1943), 133 (who point out that the last three letters of *δεσπότου* are original and not, as previously thought, a later addition after the erasure).

[4] *CIG* iv.8788 (now lost). For the epithet *συστατικός* see Mango and Ševčenko, *BZ* lxv (1972), 388, n.24, who date the inscription to the reign of Constans II (641–68) or Constantine IV (668–85).

[5] *Byz.* xiii (1938), 165f. [6] *BZ* xxxviii (1938), 583.

[7] *Hérésies et factions* (1968), 533.

the opposite colour[1] suggest that here too the name of the colour was erased by members of the opposite colour. There is no basis whatever for Grégoire's strange notion that the erasure points to an official 'liquidation' of the factions,[2] nor does it even prove (as Stratos thought) that the Blues played a part in the insurrection of 641[3]—especially since there is nothing to show that the Constantine of the inscription is Constantine III (641) rather than Constans (Constantine) II (641–68) or Constantine IV (668–85).[4] All we can legitimately infer from the erasure of the inscription is that faction rivalry was still active in the second half of the seventh century.

Before we leave the house of Heraclius, it is worth adding that when Justinian II recovered his throne from Apsimar in 705, he took savage and protracted revenge on all who had backed the two usurpers. Even the patriarch Callinicus was blinded for insulting Justinian during his coronation of Leontius.[5] But of the factions, not a word is said. Now if there had been any truth in the orthodox modern account of the coups of Leontius and Apsimar, why should the factions who installed two successive usurpers in Justinian's stead have escaped his vengeance?

There seems to be no further record of the factions playing anything but a purely formal role at an imperial coronation—except perhaps at the coup where Michael III was constrained to elevate his ambitious *paracoimomenos* Basil the Macedonian. It was a complete surprise to the assembled congregation in Saint Sophia when, on 26 May 866, Michael crowned Basil his co-emperor[6]—but the factions were ready with the appropriate

[1] Grégoire, *Recueil*, no. 114.5, and cf. pp. 315–6.

[2] *Byz.* 1938, 175, suggesting that Constantine or his successor 's'est brouillé avec ce parti, ou encore qu'il a rougi de l'association de son nom avec celui d'une faction'!

[3] *Byz. in the Seventh Century* ii (1972), 203. A natural enough inference for those, like Stratos, who believed that senators would be Blues, since we know that the senate took part.

[4] Grégoire's finely spun case for Constantine III was easily dismantled by Dölger in *BZ* 1938, 582–3 (cf. too S. Mazzarino, *Epigraphica* ii (1940), 302–3). All three are possible—nor can we rule out Constantine V (741–75).

[5] Nicephorus, p. 42 de Boor; Theophanes, p. 375. Theophanes says that he killed a countless number ἔκ τε τοῦ πολιτικοῦ καὶ τοῦ στρατιωτικοῦ καταλόγου (cf. p. 119), i.e. soldiers and civilians. There would be no justification for taking the first category for faction members as distinct from ordinary citizens.

[6] Theoph. Continuatus, pp. 832–3; cf. Bury, *Eastern Roman Empire* (1912), 174–5.

εὐφημίαι. The very ceremonial they must have used has come down to us in the *Book of Ceremonies*,[1] not especially long or complex but not such as could have been produced at no notice. This is not to say that the factions were very deep in Basil's confidence, but if they had withheld their co-operation or betrayed the secret to his enemies, ruthless as he was Basil might have been thwarted.

I would like to suggest, however, that during the reign of the great iconoclast emperor Constantine V (741–75) the factions gained a certain amount of *extra*-ceremonial power—though not by their own initiative.

In 763 Constantine set out to destroy the influential iconodule monk Stephen, abbot of a monastery on Mount Auxentius, not far from Nicomedia.[2] He got one of his courtiers, George Syncletus, to associate with Stephen and undergo the tonsure.[3] Then he called together the people in the hippodrome and, standing in the Red grandstand,[4] addressed them as follows:

> I will have nothing to do with that band hated of God.—
> 'No trace of them remains in your city, lord.'—
> I can no longer withstand their plottings. They have seduced all my subjects and consigned them to darkness. Not content with this they have snatched away from my thigh him who was dearest to my heart, George Syncletus, and made him a monk . . .

Constantine then announced that he would pray for God to reveal George to him again.

[1] *De Caer.* i.38*b*. The date of the various elements in this chapter has been much debated, but the consensus is that it antedates the coronation of Basil (cf. A. Vogt, *Comm.* ii (1940), 2–11).

[2] *V. S. Stephanii iunioris* (*PG* c.1113f.; the dialogue quoted below at 1135f.) written by Stephanus Diaconus in 808; cf. C. Diehl, 'Une Vie de saint de l'époque des empereurs iconoclastes', *CRAI* 1915, 134f. Theophanes, p. 437, and Nicephorus, p. 72, confirm that Stephen was accused of inciting people to abandon the world for the cloister. A translation with useful commentary will shortly be published by M.-F. Rouan.

[3] George *may* have been a genuine disciple of Stephen's and the story of the preconcerted plan an invention of the iconodule biographer; but this would not affect the way Constantine exploited the incident in the hippodrome.

[4] Why should Constantine have chosen the Red benches to perform from unless he had been a Red himself? Jarry (*Hérésies et factions*, 540) has him a Blue, for the frivolous reason that his favourite charioteer was called Uranicus, an allegedly Blue name! But perhaps he favoured one of the minor colours so as not to antagonize either of the major colours (compare the case of Anastasius, p. 72).

A few days later he called another assembly in the hippodrome, no less theatrically staged:

> I have been victorious, and God has heard my prayer.—
> 'When does God not hear you?'—
> God has revealed him I seek, and if you wish I will show you him.—
> 'Punish him, kill him, burn him who contravenes your bidding.'

Constantine duly produced George, complete in the hated monastic attire. To cries of 'crucify him' the different items of his habit were stripped off and trodden underfoot. There and then he was baptized afresh, to undo Stephen's baptism of him as a monk. After this they dressed him again, this time in the gear of a soldier, with Constantine himself buckling on his sword.

Two years later, in November 765, Constantine held yet another such meeting, as before taking no initiative against Stephen himself, but 'appealing' to his people. It is hardly surprising that a few days later Stephen (then in town) was lynched in the streets of Constantinople, victim (it could be alleged) of popular indignation rather than a tyrant's revenge.

We have heard much of the people pressuring their emperor at the circus, but here we have a classic example of the emperor pressuring his people. It scarcely needs saying that all this was very carefully staged. It would be logical to suppose that those who led the dialogue with Constantine on the people's side were the factions, and there are in fact several other points that conspire to support this hypothesis.

With the banning of religious art, the main field left available for official art was the games;[1] Constantine replaced the representation of the ecumenical councils on the ceiling of the Milion with a picture of his favourite charioteer.[2] Grabar has well emphasized the traditional imperial significance of such themes,[3] but Constantine's extravagant emphasis on the games must also have had the more practical effect of delighting circus fans.

[1] *V. Steph.*, *PG* c.1113, δένδρα, ἢ ὄρνεα, ἢ ζῶα ἄλογα, μάλιστα δὲ τὰ Σατανικὰ ἱππηλάσια, κυνήγια, θέατρα καὶ ἱπποδρόμια ἀνιστορημένα.

[2] *V. Steph.* 1172, cf. *Porphyrius*, pp. 204–5.

[3] *L'Iconoclasme byzantin* (1957), 155f.; cf. *L'Empereur dans l'art byzantin* (1936), Ch. I, with the reservations in *Porphyrius*, pp. 2of. (cf. C. Walter, *REB* 1974, 410).

More specifically, the hippodrome meetings just described took place late in 763, after Constantine's triumphal return from a decisive victory over the Bulgars on the shores of the Black Sea.[1] Nicephorus tells us that the emperor handed over his prisoners for lynching 'to the citizens and to the *people of the so-called colours*'.[2] Here then we have the factions behaving not so gently—though because Constantine was encouraging them, not of their own rowdiness. Theophanes draws attention to Constantine's glorification by the factions at his triumphal games;[3] since acclamations by the factions were normal every time the emperor entered the hippodrome Theophanes' words perhaps imply something more specific and spectacular on this occasion. Add to these details the far more important fact revealed in another work of Nicephorus (p. 137), that the leaders of the factions (*both* factions) were prominent among the iconoclast party ('as you would expect of such a rowdy bunch', predictably adds the iconodule Nicephorus).

It is perhaps legitimate to suggest that Constantine deliberately courted the factions, bodies traditionally very close to the emperor, and encouraged them to lend him their peculiar assistance in his campaign against the monks, both through their role as spokesmen of the people in the hippodrome and also in their capacity to exert a more practical influence (whence Nicephorus' allusion to their rowdiness).

Such allies among the people would have been useful for Constantine's other theatrically staged anti-monastic demonstrations in the hippodrome; as when in 766 monks and nuns were made to parade around the arena hand in hand to the hisses of the people[4] (at Ephesus they were given the choice between marriage or blinding!).[5]

If I am right, then, under Constantine V we find the factions playing what amounts to a political role—though not, of course, an *independent* role. There must surely have been other occasions in other periods when emperors exploited the factions in this or similar ways.

In an influential paper of 1949 A. Maricq argued that as late as

[1] 763 rather than 762; Ostrogorsky, *History of the Byz. State*[2] (1968), 169, n.1.
[2] p. 69.20. [3] p. 433.12. [4] Theophanes, p. 437.27.
[5] Theophanes, p. 445.5.

811 the factions were still independent political parties, poised even then to take over the Byzantine state[1]. Two texts underlie this claim.

First a passage in the *Patria* of Ps.-Codinus: Michael Rangabé, *curopalates* under Nicephorus I (802–11) and subsequently Michael I (811–13), is said to have broken off the hands of the statue of the Tyche of the city 'so that the popular parties (*δημοτικὰ μέρη*) would have no power against their rulers'.[2] Maricq took it for granted that these parties must be the factions.

Second, there is Theophanes' account of the aftermath of Nicephorus' defeat and death at the hands of Krum the Bulgar in 811. Nicephorus' son, Stauracius, himself mortally wounded, was in two minds about the successor he must name. His sister wanted the throne for her husband, Michael Rangabé, but Stauracius' own instinct was to confer the crown on his empress, Theophano, rather than 'raise up democracy (*δημοκρατίαν ἐγεῖραι*) for the Christians to crown their existing misfortunes'[3]. *Democracy*? Bury thought that perhaps the dying emperor really did toy with the idea of restoring democracy, 'the wild vision of a morbid brain'.[4] Dölger and Bratianu[5] rightly pointed out that the word had changed in meaning by the Byzantine age. In the light of passages such as *ἐδημοκράτησε τὸ Βένετον μέρος*[6] and under the influence of the 'deme-fallacy' (Ch. II), they defined the word: 'mouvement populaire *en rapport avec l'organisation des dèmes*'. Maricq offered the more moderate definition: 'le pouvoir exercé par le peuple ou par un

[1] *BARB* xxxv (1949), at pp. 70–2; cf. Ostrogorsky, p. 197, n.1.

[2] *Script. Orig. Cpol.* ii (1907), ed. Preger, p. 205, § 101. One of the many MS. variants in this chapter (see Preger's app. crit.) says that Michael acted at the orders of an emperor (? Nicephorus) and so presumably before his own accession.

[3] Theophanes, p. 492.27.

[4] *Eastern Roman Empire* (1912), 18.

[5] 'Empire et "Démocratie" à Byzance', *BZ* xxxvii (1937), 86f.

[6] Theophanes, p. 166.26; cf. *τὸ Πράσινον μέρος ἐδημοκράτησε ἐν τῇ Ῥώμῃ* (Malalas, p. 244, under Gaius!); Claudius . . . *τῇ δημοκρατίᾳ τῶν Πρασίνων κατάστασιν ἔδωκεν* (Malalas, p. 246); Ephraem the governor *ἠγωνίσατο κατὰ τῶν δημοκρατούντων Βενέτων. καὶ λοιπὸν ἡσύχασεν ἡ δημοκρατία τοῦ Βενέτου μέρους* (Malalas, p. 417); *τὸ Πράσινον μέρος Ἀντιοχείας δημοκρατοῦν ἐπήρχετο τοῖς ἄρχουσιν* (Malalas, p. 393); cf. the letter of Atticus, patriarch of Constantinople, to Cyril of Alexandria justifying his insertion of John Chrysostom's name in the diptychs as his legitimate predecessor under popular pressure, *ἡμῶν βιασαμένων τὴν ἐκ τῆς δημοκρατίας ἀνάγκην* (*PG* lxxvii.349D); Atticus agreed *ὥστε μή . . . ἐθισθῆναι εἰς δημοκρατίαν τὴν πόλιν* (ibid. 352A), where the context shows that an unfavourable sense is intended, 'violent pressure'.

parti populaire'. Yet so precise a meaning simply does not fit the examples quoted below. The shift in the meaning of the word is more complete and more ironic still: merely 'riot'.[1] It is the reference to the colour that identifies the faction riot; δημοκρατία (-έω) is itself of quite general significance. This is why the same Theophanes can use it of 'cosmic disturbances' (κοσμικαὶ δημοκρατίαι) in the sky following the appearance of a comet.[2]

Stauracius was afraid that if he named Michael rather than Theophano he would be plunging the empire into civil disorder (because Michael would not be capable of facing up to its problems at this moment of crisis—as indeed he was not). Not democracy, then; nor a 'faction coup'; just chaos.

As for Tyche's broken hands, the *Patria* are full of silly stories about the powers of statues.[3] If there was such a legend connecting Tyche's hands with popular parties, then naturally there is no evidence here for *real* popular parties in Michael's own day. Jarry[4] went further even than Maricq in inferring that it was Michael Rangabé who 'liquidated' the factions. But even the *Patria* ascribe to him only a pious hope.[5]

We are now in the ninth century, the world of the *Book of Ceremonies*. At last we really know where we are (so it is confidently assumed). The factions of the ninth and tenth centuries lived for nothing but the races and the attendant ceremonial. 'Toutes les manifestations officielles à l'Hippodrome étaient réglées d'avance; on ne laissait rien à l'initiative privée . . . Les démarques, créatures des empereurs, n'auraient certainement pas permis à leurs factions d'adresser publiquement au chef de l'État des demandes indiscrètes.'[6]

So admittedly the *Book of Ceremonies* might *seem* to suggest. But there is a gaping fallacy in the assumption, obvious enough when recognized. The *Book of Ceremonies* is no record of what the factions actually *did*. It is a collection of the protocols they were

[1] That is to say τὸ *Βένετον μέρος ἐδημοκράτησε* means *exactly* the same as τὸ *Βένετον μέρος . . . ἠτάκτει* (Malalas, p. 416B).

[2] p. 181.17. [3] Some are quoted by Mango in *DOP* 1963, 61.

[4] *Hérésies et factions*, 544.

[5] If anything is to be made of patriographical sources in this connection, it is relevant to quote the statement of the mid-8th-century *Par. Syn. Chron.* § 63, p. 61 Preger: 'There have been many murders and evils in the hippodrome, *especially* in former times'.

[6] Guilland, *BS* 1969, 2–3.

supposed to perform on a limited number of special occasions, protocols that were periodically revised and updated so as to serve as accurate models. This being the purpose of this very practical book, it should be obvious that nothing but the correct ceremonial for certain occasions will have been included. Everything else will have been not so much excluded as simply omitted, not because it was 'indiscreet' or disloyal but because it was irrelevant.

There must have been a Book of Ceremonies of sorts already in the sixth century, a collection of the rather simpler protocols then in use. A fair number of factional utterances of the period, mostly anything but respectful, have come down to us in the chronicles, suggesting that their *notarii* and *chartularii* kept very full records. It will have been from these files that the earliest ceremonial books were compiled, though naturally the abusive matter will have been omitted as irrelevant. It was only the εὐφημίαι that had to be got right; δυσφημίαι they could make up on the spur of the moment.

So while Constantine VII's *Book of Ceremonies* tells us a great deal about the purely ceremonial side of factional activity in the ninth and tenth centuries, it does not, never purported, and cannot be expected to tell us anything whatever about anything else they did or said. To look in the *Book of Ceremonies* for evidence of factional violence is like looking for evidence of student sit-ins in a university calendar.

It would be gratuitous and implausible to suggest that the Blues and Greens still rampaged up and down the Mese setting fire to shops and churches every race-day. That sort of behaviour probably died out, at least as a regular thing, in the seventh century. But it would be no less implausible to assume that, given their continuing role as *de facto* spokesmen of the people at the games, they *never* gave vent to abuse or protest at moments of stress or tumult.

We do in fact possess a curious and unfortunately corrupt poem which has been plausibly identified as a satirical song about the Empress Theophano, wife successively of Romanus II and Nicephorus Phocas, and finally exiled by her lover John Tzimisces.[1] There are no positive grounds for supposing that the poem (probably written in 970, when Theophano was safely in

[1] G. Morgan, 'A Byzantine Satirical Song', *BZ* xlvii (1954), 292–7.

exile) was publicly performed by the factions, but it is in political (then known as 'demotic') verse, the standard metre for factional doggerel in the later period,[1] and the possibility should certainly be left open. From the early twelfth century we have much more such faction doggerel in political verse, mostly ascribed to the prolific Theodore Prodromos.[2] All are respectful not to say cringing offerings for imperial occasions, but it might be rash to infer that, even now, this was the only sort there was.

Faction rivalry at least will never have declined, permanently fostered as it was by the continuing excitement of the races[3] (chariot-racing was the one overriding preoccupation of the Blues and Greens from first to last). Can we really believe that the excitement *never* proved too much for even the pampered factions of the tenth century and after? Was there *never* even a mild δημοτικὴ συμβολή under Constantine VII or the Comneni?

Faction activity lasted as long as the emperors continued to live in the Great Palace and patronize the hippodrome. With the transfer of the imperial court to Blachernae in the course of the twelfth century both the hippodrome and chariot-racing itself fell into decline.[4] The factions did not survive. For all their long and intimate association with imperial ceremonial in all its aspects, they remained circus fans to the end. With the decline of the circus they lost their primary *raison d'être* and the basis for their role in ceremonial. With their decline the demotic verse they had developed and made their own took on a new name with wider connotations, the name it has borne ever since, the political verse.[5]

[1] See Michael Jeffreys, 'The Nature and Origins of the Political Verse', *DOP* xxviii (1975), at pp. 238f.

[2] Ibid. pp. 177 f.; Theodoros Prodromos, *Historische Gedichte* (ed. W. Hörandner, 1974), Nos. IV, V. IX–XIV, XXXI–XXXIII.

[3] Though the *number* of races did fall quite sharply, from 24 and more a day in the sixth century to only 8 in the tenth: cf. *Porphyrius*, pp. 256–7.

[4] *Porphyrius*, pp. 5–6.

[5] Jeffreys, p. 180.

XII. Epilogue

THE story of the circus factions is long and complex, from Romulus to the Crusades, from the circus of Rome to every arena in the Byzantine world. Small wonder that those who have concentrated on limited aspects have been baffled and misled.

There is a deceptive line of continuity between the Blues and Greens of Rome and Constantinople. The 'original' Blues and Greens were exclusively circus fans. Alongside them but quite unconnected, there had always existed the partisans of the theatre, more rowdy but less conspicuous under a multitude of ephemeral names. The amalgamation of public entertainments described in Ch. VIII united them both under the names of the circus colours. It was this event that gave birth to the factions of the early Byzantine world.

There were two crucial ways in which these more numerous 'theatrical' Blues and Greens transformed their relatively uninteresting circus predecessors. (a) The hooliganism formerly associated with countless individual bands of anonymous theatre fans now became the virtual monopoly and ubiquitous hallmark of the 'new' Blues and Greens. (b) The claque system of the theatre fans was introduced into the circus, and the new Blue and Green claqueurs made responsible for the ceremonial performances that greeted the emperor at his public appearances.

It was this ceremonial role that was to change the character of the factions and raise them to a position of real importance. The rowdy behaviour which has always attracted most attention, then as now, certainly increased both in violence and perhaps too in frequency, but it brought nothing new of either political or even social significance. Contrary to popular belief (modern, not ancient), the factions did not champion popular causes or resist the demands of central government (except in its police capacity). Least of all did they spearhead 'resistance to imperial absolutism'; on the contrary, their increasing

involvement in imperial ceremonial drew them ever closer to the emperor. By the seventh century they had effectively become a part of his court.

Naturally they began to riot less. What had they ever gained from riots? What did they lose by giving them up? But they remained ready enough to exploit their remarkable power (an unintended consequence of the role they always played in coronation ceremonies) of influencing the proclamation of usurpers. Such was their decline.

Thus the rise and decline alike of the Blues and Greens of Byzantium are less clear-cut as well as less momentous than has generally been supposed. Their sudden leap to prominence in the fifth century is largely illusory, not a new phenomenon at all but the incidental consequence of a reorganization of public entertainments. Their 'decline' is really an ascent to respectability. Nothing was changed for the better by their rise, nothing was changed for the worse by their decline.

Hooliganism at theatre and circus had always been rife in the Roman world. It merely got worse under the Blues and Greens. Popular protest and demonstration too had flourished in the early Empire and were to flourish again in the late Byzantine period.

Between 1042 and 1081 there were five popular insurrections in Constantinople, four of which succeeded in deposing emperors (Michael V, Michael VI, Constantine X, Michael VII). S. Vryonis Jr.[1] has shown that in every case the city guilds played an important part—confirmed by the pains the next emperor took to reward them for their efforts. But when he goes on to conclude that by the eleventh century the guilds had come to exercise 'some of the political functions of the old demes and circus factions',[2] the perspective needs correcting.

It may be that the eleventh-century guilds did serve as a vehicle for 'the political expression of the people', but the factions of the sixth and seventh centuries did not. Indeed, when did the factions ever take so active a part against an established emperor? To recapitulate the most favourable

[1] 'Byzantine δημοκρατία and the Guilds in the Eleventh Century', *DOP* xvii (1963), 289–314.

[2] p. 314. Vryonis believed that the 'so-called demes (militia) and the circus parties (Blues and Greens)' (p. 291) were somehow distinct.

example, the fall of Maurice in 602, the popular insurrection that drove Maurice to give up the struggle began when the factions were still loyally manning the walls for him against Phocas (their contribution was to welcome Phocas once Maurice had fled). The role of the eleventh-century guilds should be seen for what it is: a *new* development in popular expression[1].

The guilds of Constantinople will have numbered many thousands, drawn from every profession, from the wealthy to the humble. There is some probability that, when moved to political action, they would be tolerably representative of the people as a whole—at least as representative as any popular movement of the day was ever likely to be. The factions as we have come to isolate and identify them in this book will have been a wholly unrepresentative body, numbering at best a thousand or two. Popular protest did take place during their violent heyday—but mostly without their co-operation and despite their hindrance (their intervention may often have discredited a serious demonstration, justifying the emperor in dismissing it as a faction brawl).

The circus factions deserve no prominent mention in any history of popular expression. The guilds of the eleventh century are the heirs, not of the factions of the early Byzantine world, but of the *populus* of Rome.

The Blues and Greens made one and only one original, important, and lasting contribution to Byzantine life and institutions: their role in the dazzling ceremonial that, to the amazement of foreign visitors, surrounded and exalted the person of the emperor.

[1] Despite the few examples quoted above (p. 85), Roman guilds were not normally politically active: see R. MacMullen, *Roman Social Relations* (1974), 75f., with some interesting remarks on 'the focusing of their energies on the pursuit of honor rather than of economic advantage' (p. 76).

APPENDIX A

M. Aurelius Basilius, 'princeps' of the Blues

'Basilius was the *princeps* of the Blue circus faction, an important man . . . and a member of the opposite faction to that favoured by Commodus' (Whittaker, *Historia* 1964, 368, n.159).

Here is the inscription to which we owe all we know of Basilius (*IG* xiv.1503):

Θ(εοῖς) Κ(αταχθονίοις)
Βασιλίου
νέκον (sic) χά
ριν ἐπύη
σεν[1] *Μ. Αὐρ.*
Διονύσιος
ἀδέλφῳ.
ἰς ἐῶνα Βενετιανούς, Πρίν
κιπι

Franz (*CIG* 6354) solved the problem of the apparent dative (=*principi*) in the last line by reading *ἰς ἐῶνα Βενετιανοῦ σ(υστήματος) πρίνκιπι* (agreeing with *ἀδέλφῳ*), 'to his brother, *princeps* of the Blue guild'. Now quite apart from the fact that *σύστημα* would be an inappropriate (and unattested) term for a circus faction, this is surely very improbable Greek. It would be acceptable enough to wish a dead man eternal life (though *εἰς αἰῶνα* is not a formula used for this purpose),[2] but simply absurd to wish that he be 'head' of the Blues for ever! In fact the acclamation *εἰς αἰῶνα* is restricted to concepts that might reasonably be wished to exist for ever, such as the empire, the laws of a city, and so forth.[3] It must be added that *ἰς ἐῶνα . . . πρίνκιπι* is written well apart from the main epitaph at the bottom of the stone,[4] and is surely on grounds of probability and style alone to be regarded as a quite separate and independent inscription.[5]

[1] i.e. *νέκρων χάριν ἐποίησεν.*

[2] For those that are see R. Lattimore, *Themes in Greek and Latin Epitaphs* (1942), 48f.

[3] L. Robert, *Études épigr. et phil.* (1938), 109, cf. E. Peterson, *Εἷς Θεός* (1926), 168f.

[4] As I have been able to verify from an excellent photograph kindly supplied to me by L. Moretti. The stone is still in the Basilica of Saint Paul in Rome.

[5] A. Neppi-Modona's list of circus terms in *Hommages à L. Herrmann* (1960), 570, quite unjustifiably includes *πρίνκεψ συστήματος* as a technical term equivalent to *dominus factionis*, solely on the basis of *IG* xiv.1503.

There is even less to be said for Kaibel's interpretation (*ad IG* xiv.1503): keep *Βενετιανούς* and write *πρίνκιπς*, an apostrophe to the emperor. The final iota is clearly legible, and there seems no rhyme or reason for an apostrophe to the emperor in such a context.

It seems to me that we must retain *Βενετιανούς* and interpret *πρίνκιπι* as a vocative from the proper name *Πρινκίπιος*. Principius, as Kajanto saw,[1] is Basilius' *signum* or *supernomen*.

The epitaph proper ends with *ἀδέλφῳ*, and Dionysius (or conceivably someone else) then added a less solemn postscript, in affectionate reminiscence of his brother's partisanship: 'the Blues for ever, Principius!' 'The Blues' is a concept greater than individual Blues, which could appropriately be wished 'eternal life'. Compare the rather similar inscription from Didyma,[2] *Πράσινον εἰς τ[οὺς αἰῶνας]*, and of course the standard *νικᾷ ἡ τύχη τῶν Πρασίνων* (*Βενέτων*), meaning 'long live the Greens (Blues)'.[3]

No *princeps* of the Blues then. All we have is a Basilius *signo* Principius who was an ordinary Blue partisan.

[1] *A Study of the Greek Epitaphs of Rome* (1963), 43, with many other examples of acclamations and apostrophes added to Greek epitaphs in Rome.

[2] *I. Didyma* 611, cf. *Porphyrius*, p. 20.

[3] See *Porphyrius*, p. 79.

APPENDIX B

The distribution of Blues and Greens in the eastern provinces

Where possible I have drawn attention to indications of date, though with inscriptions which bear no such indication I have not repeated the impressions of individual editors; it will be enough to state generally here (and cf. p. 199) that none has been judged earlier than the fifth century while many may be as late as the seventh.

Ai. Christophilopulu's study '*οἱ ἐκτος τῆς Κωνσταντινοπόλεως Βυζαντινοὶ δῆμοι*', *Χαρ. εἰς Α. Κ. Ὀρλάνδον* ii (1966), 327–60 (here cited simply as 'Chr.' with page number) is a useful but less complete collection. I normally quote inscriptions in the most accessible edition, and have made no attempt to supply a full bibliography.

MAINLAND GREECE

Phthiotic Thebes (near the boundary between Achaia Phthiotis and Thessaly). Acclamation to the 'orthodox Greens' (quoted p. 149) published by P. M. Lazarides, *Πρακτ. Ἀρχ. Ἑταιρ.* 1969 [1971], 21, with pl. 23a (who, misunderstanding the form of the acclamation —see *Porphyrius*, pp. 74–9, 276—mistakenly takes it as an allusion to the Nika revolt of 532).

Thessalonica. Two inscriptions of unfortunately unknown or uncertain provenance published by C. Edson in *IG* x.2.1 (1972): 20b, a very fragmentary undated reference to *Πρ*]*ασίνοις*, and 842, from the tomb of a charioteer Uranius who *εὐνόησε Βενέτῳ* (for the omission of the article (cf. *Βενέτου*, ibid.), found odd by Edson, see *Porphyrius*, pp. 70–1).

Constantinople. The earliest literary reference is Gregory Nazianzen, *Or.* 37 (31), *In Matth.* 19.1–12, §18 (*PG* xxxvi.301, 304). The earliest inscriptions (*c.* 500) are those from the new base to Porphyrius, published in *Porphyrius*, Ch. II.

AEGEAN ISLANDS

Rhodes. Doctrina Jacobi, p. 89 Bonwetsch (early seventh century), for Greens.

Crete. Acclamation to Greens: *Inscr. Cret.* iv (1950), 513, sixth century (see p. 126).

'The islands and the various stations on the sea coast', in 610 (John of Nikiu, *Chronicle*, p. 176 Charles), for Greens.

ASIA MINOR

Cyzicus. Procopius, *BP* i.25.40 (cf. *Anecd.* 17.41), for Greens, and Malalas, p. 491–2, under Justinian.

Ephesus. Eight early seventh-century acclamations: Grégoire, *Recueil*, nos. 112 (Blues); 113 bis (Blues); 113 ter (Blues); 114 (Green); 114 bis (Green); 114 ter a (Green); 114 quater (?); 114[5] (Greens) (see too Chr. pp. 350f., and above, pp. 147–8). Others await publication.

Priene. Acclamation to Greens: *Inschr. von Priene* 353 = Grégoire, *Recueil*, no. 120 (cf. *Porphyrius*, p. 77).

Miletus. Unpublished place-inscriptions from seats in the theatre, kindly shown to me by Peter Hermann: *τόπος αὐραρίων Βενέτω(ν), Βενέτων ἐ. ο. εων* (?) on which see above, p. 248.

Didyma. Inschriften von Didyma, nos. 603–4, with L. Robert, *Hellenica* xi/xii, 490f. (Blues), and 609–11 (cf. *Porphyrius*, p. 70), for the Greens.

Aphrodisias. Acclamations to Blues and Greens published (by courtesy of Kenan Erim, Joyce Reynolds, and Charlotte Roueché) in *Porphyrius*, p. 276, plus (unpublished) another from the theatre, [κα]κὰ τὰ [ἔ]τ[η] *τῶν Πρασίνων*, and three more from the Odeum: . . . *Βενέτου, τόπος Βενε*' (with the last 7 letters partially erased) and *τόπος Βενέτων* inscribed above '*Εβρέων τῶν παλειῶν*. For *κακὰ τὰ ἔτη* cf. *De Caer.* 318.13 and an unpublished inscription from Alexandria.

Stratoniceia. Acclamation to Greens: Grégoire, *Recueil*, no. 243 bis (cf. Robert, *Hellenica* x.232, n.1).

A site near the boundary between Phrygia Pacatiana and Pisidia. Acclamation of Greens: Grégoire, *Recueil*, no. 311 (text above, p. 148), as located by Robert, *Hellenica* x,228–39.

Cilicia. John Lyd., *de magg.* iii.62, p. 153 Wuensch, under Justinian: John the Cappadocian conciliates the Greens in Cilica.

Tarsus. Blues under Justinian: Procopius, *Anecd.* xxix.30f.

SYRIA

Antioch. Many early apparent attestations in Malalas are almost certainly anachronisms (above, pp. 195, 200); the first secure reference is to Green riots in the reign of Zeno (Mal. pp. 389–90, with p. 150). Frequently thereafter (e.g. Theophanes, p. 166 and Procopius, *Anecd.* 12.28 for Justin I).

Apamea. *ACO* iii.96.17f. of 518 (actress of Blues); Procopius, *BP* ii.11.31f., of 540 (pantomime of Blues).

Heliopolis. Acclamation to Blues: *IGLS* vi.2836 (*Porphyrius*, p. 74).

Berytus. Curse tablet against Blue horses and charioteers: *SEG* vii.213, with A. Maricq, *Byzantion* 1952, 368f. For the date above, p. 194.

Apheca. Curse tablet against Blue pantomime, Audollent, *Defix. Tab.* 15–16, with Robert, *Études epigr. et phil.* (1938), 99–102, and Maricq, *Byzantion* 1952, 360–8. For the date, above, p. 200, n.1.

Taff (in the Ledjâ). Acclamation to the Blues: *Princeton Expedition to Syria* iiia (1921), no. 804 (*Porphyrius*, p. 74).

Umm idj-Djimâl. Two acclamations to the Blues: *Princeton Expedition to Syria* iiia (1921), nos. 256 and 266 (*Porphyrius*, p. 74). Acclamation to the Reds: Waddington 2425 with *Pr. Exp. Syria* iiia, p. 148 and p. 72 above.

'Ormân. *νικᾷ ἡ τύχη τῶν . . . . . ων κα(ὶ) . . . . . τοῦ βασιλεως, πολλὰ τὰ ἔτη*, with the date 611 inscribed elsewhere on the altar (R. Dussaud, *Voyage, archéol. au Safâ* (1921), p. 164, no. 33, with *Pr. Exp. Syria* iiia, p. 148). In the light of Grégoire 114 and 114.5 from Ephesus (quoted p. 147) it seems likely that the second gap contained the name Heraclius and the first *Πρασίνων* (or some high-flown, longer variant), both subsequently erased by the opposition.

PALESTINE

Caesarea. Pace Christophilopulu (p. 359), when Theophanes says (p. 230) that Jews and Samaritans united *ἐν τάξει Πρασινοβενέτων* in 555, he means only that their union was as surprising as that of the *Πρασινοβένετοι* of the Nika revolt. So no valid evidence for Caesarea.

Jerusalem. Acclamation to Blues: *SEG* viii.213, with L. Robert, *Hellenica* xi/xii.492 and *Porphyrius*, p. 74, n.3. And for Blues and Greens in the early seventh century, 'Antiochus Strategus', *EHR* xxv (1910), 503.

EGYPT

Alexandria. *P. Cairo Isidore*, 57–8, of 315, referring to the Blues; Malalas, frag. 49, *Exc. de Insid.* p. 169 of 516; Lefebvre, *Recueil des inscr. grecques chrét. d'Égypte* (1907), no. 37 (Blues); John of Nikiu, §§107–8 (610), 119 (642). Fifteen graffiti (mostly of the *νικᾷ ἡ τύχη . . .* type) from a theatre in the middle of the city still unpublished. I am very much in the debt of Dr. Z. Borkowski for the opportunity of studying this interesting find.

Aykelah. John of Nikiu, §97 (under Maurice), for Blues and Greens.

Menouf. John of Nikiu, §107 (under Phocas), for Greens.

Heracleopolis. Sammelbuch 9154 (6/7th cent.); *P. Stud. Pal.* viii. 1179 (6th cent.); ibid. 1180 (7th cent.); 1087 (8th cent.); ibid. x.197 (7/8th cent.); 225 (8th cent.), all but 1179 attesting a quarter (λαύρα) of the Blues (Chr. p. 346, n.77).

Oxyrhynchus. P. Oxy. 145 (552), embrocation for Green horses; 152 (618), Blues; 2480 (565/6), Blues; *PSI* 953.42 (6th cent.); *P. London* 1028 (7th cent.), Greens; two Blue acclamations (time of Phocas), *Stud. ital. di fil.* 1912, 305 = *Sammelbuch* 6018 (cf. p. 148 above).

Antinoe. Comb depicting Blue pantomime: A. Dain, *Inscr. grecques du Musée du Louvre* (1933), no. 217 (with *Porphyrius*, p. 74); the charioteer papyrus, now republished (and dated *c.* 500) by E. G. Turner in *JHS* 1973, 191–5 (with colour plate).

Of unknown provenance, *P. Strasb.* 287 (6th cent.), referring to Blues (cf. p. 148 above).

Postscript: M. Chéhab, 'Le cirque de Tyr,' *Archeologia*, Feb. 1973, p. 20, announces the discovery of a mosaic inscription to the Blues in a bath near the hippodrome of Tyre, unfortunately with no indication of its date or character.

APPENDIX C

A circus dialogue

This remarkable dialogue has been much misunderstood, both in details of interpretation and in its over-all purpose and significance. The wider aspects are dealt with elsewhere in the book (e.g. pp. 140 f., 287); this appendix presents a translation, some notes on the more obscure passages, and my reasons for disassociating it from the Nika revolt of 532. There are also one or two remarks on its supposedly metrical character.[1]

The dialogue itself is introduced with the words: *γέγονε δὲ ἡ ἀταξία τοῦ Νίκα*[2] *τρόπῳ τοιούτῳ· ἀνελθόντα τὰ μέρη τῷ ἱππικῷ, ἔκραξαν οἱ (δῆμοι,* add. *Chron. Pasch.) τῶν Πρασίνων· ἄκτα διὰ Καλοπόδιον τὸν κουβικουλάριον καὶ σπαθάριον.* As Tabachovitz alone has seen (*Studien*, 45), there should be no punctuation after *Πρασίνων*. *ἄκτα διὰ K.* is not intended, as it has always been taken, as a *title* for the dialogue; *ἔκραξον οἱ τῶν Πρασίνων ἄκτα διὰ K.* means 'the Greens shouted acclamations *at* Calopodius'. *ἄκτα* is the technical term for faction acclamations (e.g. *De Caer.* 216.20, *οἱ κράκται δὲ λέγουσιν ἀπὸ τούτων ἕτερα ἄκτα 'καλας ἡμέρας . . .'*, 51.6f., 326.21f. etc.). Compare from Malalas (p. 407.19) the similar acclamations (omitting the word *ἄκτα* but using *διά*+acc. followed by direct speech in the same way) addressed to Anicia Juliana's husband Areobindus in 512, *ἔκραξον διὰ τὸν ἄνδρα αὐτῆς Ἀρεόβινδον βασιλέα τῇ Ῥωμανίᾳ*, which means 'they shouted *at* her husband, "Areobindus for emperor of Rome".' The title of a set of *ἄκτα* is *ἀκτολογία* (e.g. *De Caer.* 251.15, *ἀκτολογία τῶν δήμων ἐπὶ προαγωγῇ* (=promotion) *πατρικίου*).

[1] There are translations into English in the two editions of Bury's *Later Roman Empire* (ii[1] (1889), 57–9 and ii[2] (1923), 71–4); into French in C. Diehl, *Justinien et la civilisation byzantine au VI[e] siècle* (1901), 458–61; into German by J. Irmscher, in *Orbis Mediaevalis, Festgabe für Anton Blaschka* (1970), 78–88. Add (in addition to many passing allusions in general works on the period and on the factions) P. Karlin-Hayter, 'Les *Ἄκτα διά Καλοπόδιον*, la forme primitive', *Festschrift Marcel Richard* (in press; seen by courtesy of the author), and *Byz.* xliii (1973), 84–107. There are also some useful contributions tucked away in D. Tabachovitz, *Textkritische und Sprachliche Studien zur Chronik des Theophanes Confessor* (Diss. Uppsala 1926). Naturally I have worked from the texts of de Boor, Theophanes a.m. 6024, pp. 181.30–184.1, and Maas, 'Metrische Akklamationen der Byzantiner', *BZ* xxi (1912), 31–3, cf. 49–51, though I have not followed either throughout.

[2] On the accent see *Porphyrius*, p. 77.

Translation

Greens. Long may you live, Justinian Augustus! May you always conquer![1] I am wronged, best of emperors, and cannot endure my burdens, God knows. I fear to name the oppressor, lest he prosper the more and I endanger my own safety [5].

Manadator. Who is he? We do not know.

⟨*Greens*⟩. My oppressor, O thrice august, is to be found in the quarter of the shoemakers.[2]

Mandator. No one is doing you any wrong.

Greens. It is one man and one man alone who does me wrong. Mother of God, may he be humbled [10].[3]

Mandator. If there is such a man, we know not who he is.

Greens. It is Calopodius the spathar who wrongs me, Lord of all [15].

Mandator. Calopodius is innocent.[4]

Greens. If he is not, he will share the fate of Judas. God will requite him swiftly for my wrongs.

Mandator. You come, not to watch the games, but to insult your masters [20].

Greens. If anyone wrongs me, he will share the fate of Judas.

Mandator. Be silent, Jews, Manichaeans, and Samaritans!

Greens. Do you insult us with the name of Jews and Samaritans? The Mother of God is with us all.

Mandator. How long will you go on bringing down curses on your own head?

The Greens shouted among each other and, on the bidding of Antlas, chanted:[5]

[1] *του βίκας*. On this formula see *Porphyrius*, 77–9, 248.

[2] Not a true address, but a play on the oppressor's name, Calo-podius. There seems to me no reason whatever to suppose (e.g. with Karlin-Hayter, *Byz.* 1973, 87, n.2) that Calopodius is not the man's true name. It is (as she admits) a common eunuch's name, and what would be the point in the Greens concealing the name of the man they are protesting about?

[3] So Bury[2] for *μή ἀνακεφαλίσῃ* ('let him never raise his head' in 1889).

[4] K. *οὐκ ἔχει πρᾶγμα*. 'C. has no concern with you' *et sim.* earlier translators, but cf. Palladius, *Hist. Laus.* p. 165.26, *ἐγὼ τὸ ὂν εἶπον, ὅτι οὐκ ἔχω πρᾶγμα*[2]. *ἀναίτιος γάρ εἰμι*, and other passages quoted by Tabachovitz, pp. 29–30.

[5] *οἱ δὲ Πράσινοι ἐβόησαν ἐπάνω (?) ἀλλήλων καὶ ἔκραζον ὡς ἐκέλευσεν Ἄντλας*. Antlas is evidently the *chef du claque* of the Greens (see p. 259), whether or not yet officially called demarch. It is building on sand indeed to punctuate after *ἔκραζον* (with Jarry, *Hér. et factions*, p. 139) and take Antlas to be an otherwise unknown heresiarch who ordered a particular form of baptism.

If anyone denies that our Lord the emperor is orthodox [25],[1] let him be anathema as Judas.

Mandator. I say to you, are you baptized in the name of one God?[2]

Greens. I *am* baptized in the name of one God.[3]

Mandator. Really, if you refuse to be silent, I shall have you beheaded!

Greens. Everybody is eager to win office to secure his own safety [30].[4] Your majesty must not be angry at what I may say in my tribulation. For God listens patiently to all entreaties.[5] It is with right on our side (*λόγον ἔχοντες*) that we now spell out all (*ὀνομάζομεν πάντα*). We do not know,[6] thrice august, where either the palace is or the government [? ceremonial[7]] of the state. If I come into the city once, it is sitting on a mule[8]— and I wish I had not come then, thrice august [40].

Mandator. Everybody is free to move about in public (*δημοσιεύει*) wherever he wishes without danger.

Greens. I know all about (*θαρρῶ*) freedom—yet I'm not allowed to use it! And if any 'free' man[9] is suspected of being a Green, he is sure to be publicly punished [45].

[1] See p. 142 for the meaning of this elliptic phrase.

[2] It is surely more natural to place a question-mark here, than to take it as either a statement (Karlin-Hayter) or an imperative (Bury and others).

[3] Probably *not*, as Bury and many since have assumed, a monophysite allusion: see p. 141.

[4] An abrupt transition; is it possible that something explaining this reference to seeking of office (presumably the office which is now protecting Calopodius) has fallen out of the text? It is not easy to take the *ἀρχή* as the emperor's, nor would that explain the transition to his hoped for patience.

[5] Tabachovitz (pp. 50–2) ingeniously attributes to the Mandator *τὸ θεῖον γὰρ πάντων ἀνέχεται*, 'Yes (*sc.* I will listen), for God puts up with all things', and takes *ἡμεῖς λόγον ἔχοντες* to mean 'relying on that promise' (parallels, pp. 51–2). But this would be an unwontedly conciliatory reply for the Mandator—and certainly a promise he did not keep long (cf. l. 46). And while all would concede that *γὰρ* so used is common in the dialogue of Greek drama and Plato, is it a Byzantine usage?

[6] I am ignoring Maas's excision (followed by Bury[2]) of ll. 34–5, and punctuating *ποῦ ἐστιν, ἡμεῖς οὐκ οἴδαμεν, οὐδε . . .*

[7] *κατάστασις*, as in the exchange between the Blues and Phocas' representative discussed p. 252 above. It is usually taken (see p. 88) to mean 'government'—though one wonders what sort of government it is the location of which the Greens avow ignorance of (i.e. which buildings in addition to the palace). Naturally, scholars have assumed (implausibly, Ch. XI) that the Greens have been 'kept out of politics'. The simpler and more natural inference from their protest is that they have been excluded from the palace, where they normally took part along with the Blues in the imperial ceremonial (see pp. 251 f.).

[8] i.e. being led to execution.

[9] In view of this heavily ironic emphasis on a 'freedom' that is denied to the Greens, it is striking to find the Blues, in two epigrams from the last monument of

Mandator. Have you no care for your immortal souls that you thus brave death?

Greens. Just let the (Green) flag be lifted[1] and goodbye justice. Do away with the murdering and allow us to be punished legally. Look, an abundant fountain—punish as many as you like! Truly, human nature cannot tolerate the two together [50].[2] Oh, that Sabbatius[3] had never been born, to have a son who is a murderer! This is the twenty-sixth[4] murder committed in the Zeugma.[5] In the morning he was watching the races, in the afternoon he was murdered, Lord of all.

Blues. You are the only party in the hippodrome[6] that has murderers among you.

Greens. You murder and then run away [55].

Blues. You murder and then stir up trouble. *You're* the only party in the hippodrome that has murderers among you.

Greens. Lord Justinian, they challenge us and no one murders them. No one can fail to see that![7] Who killed the woodseller in the Zeugma, Emperor? [60]

Mandator. You killed him.

Greens. Who killed the son of Epagathus, Emperor?

Mandator. You killed him yourselves, and you are falsely accusing the Blues.

Greens. Now indeed have pity on us. O Lord God! The truth is being suppressed. I'd like to argue with those who say that affairs are managed by God [66]. If so, whence this misfortune of ours?

Mandator. God cannot be tempted with evil (James 1:13).

Greens. God cannot be tempted with evil? Then who is wronging me? Will some philosopher or hermit kindly explain the distinction? [70]

Mandator. Accused blasphemers, will you never hold your tongue!

Porphyrius, described as *ἐλευθερόπαις Βενέτων . . . δῆμος* and *δῆμος ἐλεύθερος* (*Anth. Plan.* 359.5, 360.3). Perhaps it was a motif that recurred in many such hippodrome dialogues of this period (whenever that was). Porphyrius' last base seems to belong *c.*545 (*Porphyrius*, p. 178). This seems to me a conclusive argument against P. Karlin-Hayter's attempt to emend *ἐλευθερία* here to *ἀληθεία*.

[1] *ἐπαρθῇ τὸ χρῶμα τοῦτο.* [2] i.e. indiscriminate murder and legal justice.

[3] Justinian's father. [4] *εἰκοστὸς ἕκτος*] *εἰκότως* several MSS and de Boor.

[5] For the Zeugma, p. 87 above.

[6] *σταδίου*, for the Byzantine but not for us merely a synonym for hippodrome.

[7] *νοήσει ὁ μὴ θέλων*, which I take to mean 'even he who is unwilling will see', cf. *στέγω καὶ μὴ θέλων* in 74). 'Truth will compel assent', rather loosely Bury; ('voyons, raisonnons' (?), Diehl.

Greens. If it is your Majesty's pleasure, I shall keep my peace, though against my will, thrice august. I know all, but I say nothing [75]. Farewell justice, you are no more! I shall cross over and become a Jew! Better to be a pagan than a Blue, God knows!

Blues. I abominate you, I cannot abide to look at you.[1] Such malice appalls me [80].

Greens. Let the bones of the spectators be dug up![2]

THE DATE AND SOURCE OF THE DIALOGUE

Despite Maas's decisive demonstration to the contrary,[3] historians continue to insist that the dialogue forms part of the antecedents of the Nika revolt: most notably (and forcibly) E. Stein,[4] most recently P. Karlin-Hayter.[5]

The only source to record the dialogue in full is Theophanes (we shall be returning below to the excerpt in the *Chron. Pasch.*). Now Theophanes' section on the revolt comprises three quite separate accounts, juxtaposed with only superficial (and disastrous) attempts at harmonization: (a) 181.26–31 de Boor; (b) 181.32–184.2; (c) 184.3–186.2. (*a*) is a six-line summary of the whole affair; (*b*) is our dialogue; and (*c*) is another but fuller account of the whole affair.

Now there are a number of serious objections to taking (*b*) at its face value in this context. In the first place it is quite irreconcilable with (c) as an account of the origins of the revolt. (c) is basically the version of Malalas,[6] beginning with the city prefect's unsuccessful attempt to impale the Blue and Green prisoners. (b) is a dialogue between the Greens and the emperor in which the Greens complain that they are being terrorized by the Blues and can get no redress from the emperor. Nothing in it has anything to do with any of the known circumstances of the Nika revolt. The bitter hostility between

[1] *τὸ (?δ) μισῶ οὐ θέλω βλέπειν.*

[2] A concluding flourish, after which the Greens, insultingly enough, walked out *en masse* (*καὶ κατῆλθον οὗτοι καὶ ἔσαν τὸν βασιλεα καὶ τοὺς Βενέτους θεωροῦντας*). The curse is standard, paradoxically meaning 'let them be killed'. Cf. (e.g.) *ἀνασκφῇ τὰ ὀστέα τῶν εἰκόνων* (of the Iconoclasts), Nicephorus, *contra Euseb. et Epiph.*, ed. Pitra, *Spic. Sol.* iv.306; *ἀνασκαφῇ τὰ ὀστέα Ἰουστινιανοῦ*, Theophanes, A.M. 6187; *ἀνασκαφείη τὰ ὀστᾶ τοῦ Καλαφάτου*, Cedrenus ii.537; and several translated from the Syriac of John of Ephesus, 'out with the bones of the dicasts' (at a trial), iii.31, and 'out with the bones of the heathens' (ibid.); 'out with the bones of the Arians', 'dig from their graves the bones of the Arians', ibid. iii.26.

[3] *BZ* 1912, 49–51. [4] *Bas-Empire* ii (1949), 450, n.1.

[5] *Byz.* 1973, 85f.

[6] For the relationship between the sources for the revolt see (still) Bury, *JHS* 1897, 92f., mistaken only in the matter of the source of the dialogue, though he saw clearly that there was something amiss with the relevant section of the *Chron. Pasch.* (p. 98).

Blues and Greens that it manifests scarcely foreshadows their collaboration over the issue of the prisoners. And although Justinian took no notice of the allegations against Calopodius in the dialogue, the Greens apparently forget all about him once the revolt begins.

To meet these objections, it has been suggested that, as a consequence of the Green complaints, Justinian realized that he must be more impartial in future. So he was careful to have both Blues and Greens arrested after their next riot,[1] and this was the occasion of the unsuccessful executions that led to the revolt. To this hypothesis it must be objected that the general tenor and especially the conclusion of the dialogue make such an immediate change of heart on Justinian's part most improbable. He rejects Green complaints against both the Blues and himself and openly sides with the Blues.

The dialogue *may* have taken place a few days before the arrests and executions, but there seems no serious possibility of actually connecting it with the arrests and executions in such a way that the dialogue could in any meaningful sense be said to be the *origin* of the revolt (*γέγονε . . . τρόπῳ τοιούτῳ*). The supposed religious arguments for dating the dialogue to 532[2] seem to me too fragile to permit serious discussion; the references to Manichees, Jews, pagans, and the like amount to no more than the stock religious abuse of the age, of no contemporary or theological significance whatever.

What now of the excerpt in the *Paschal Chronicle*, proving (or so it might appear) that Theophanes and the *Chronicle* drew it from a common source, a source which would naturally have had to be earlier than the *Paschal Chronicle* (early seventh century), and so probably as early as our most important other chronicle source, Malalas?

Maas, however, pointed out that this excerpt is an interpolation, an interpolation (so he argued) from Theophanes, no less. Perhaps because of the succinctness of his exposition, Maas's arguments seem not to have been understood by his critics. That the interpolation derives from Theophanes is a secondary (but still certain) conclusion, independent of the proofs of the interpolation, which are two (both decisive), one internal, the other external.

[1] The very same evening, according to Bury (*JHS* 1897, 118). Elsewhere, he sketched in the background: 'When the Greens marched out of the hippodrome, the Emperor sitting in the cathisma was left for a few moments alone with the Blues; but they quickly followed their enemies, and street conflicts ensued' (*Later Roman Empire* ii[1] (1889), 59). All pure conjecture, designed to lead up to the arrest 'that evening' that provoked the revolt. Bury dated the dialogue and executions to 10 January, Karlin-Hayter to the 11th, while Stein allowed that the dialogue might have taken place 'a few days' before the executions.

[2] Most recently Karlin-Hayter, *Byz.* 1973, 88f.; see above pp. 140 f.

(1) *Chron. Pasch.* 620.4–13 records the first seven exchanges of the dialogue and then summarizes the rest as follows: 'Then after many insults between the Blues and Greens and much abuse of the emperor, the Greens departed, leaving the emperor and the Blues watching the races.' Then without any pause, the narrative continues as follows: 'And the emperor sent ⟨someone⟩ to discover what they (? the Greens) were chanting.' After this (at least in the bastard text printed in the Bonn edition) two sentences rather puzzlingly restating the contents of this last sentence before Justinian's orders are obeyed; then Basilides the patrician leaves the *palace* (we left Justinian watching the races in the hippodrome) and discovers that the people are agitating for the deposition of Eudaemon, John the Cappadocian and Tribonian (not Calopodius!). That is to say, we have passed to the *second* day of the revolt (p. 279). There is worse to come. For according to the text as it stands, it can only be the Greens who are agitating against the three officials, since the Blues are still supposed to be in the hippodrome with Justinian. This we know to be false, because the Blues and Greens joined forces on the *first* day and refused to accept Justinian's offer of more races on the second day (p. 278).

There is no need to say more. There is obviously something seriously wrong with the text. We need only look at the relevant page of the only MS. (Vat. gr. 1941) to see what has happened.

The narrative of the first hand ends in the year 529/30 with the word *χρημάτων* (p. 620.2 Bonn), half-way down fol. 241^{v}. It resumes on fol. 243^{r} with these words:

> *. . . ὡς ἔτυχεν. ἀλλ' ὅτε πολλὴ γένηται ἀνάγκη, τότε ποιεῖς ἃ ἐβουλεύσω." καὶ εἶπεν αὐτοῖς ὁ βασιλεύς· "ἐξέλθατε οὖν καὶ μάθετε τίνος χάριν στασιάζουσιν." καὶ ἐξῆλθεν ἀπὸ τοῦ παλατίου ὁ πατρίκιος Βασιλίδης . . .*

Evidently a whole folium was missing from V's exemplar, containing no doubt a few random items from the year 531 and the beginning of the Nika revolt. When V^{1} picks up again, we are in the middle of a council of war in the palace on the second day. The empty space originally left on fol. 242^{v} was subsequently filled up in a different (but probably contemporary)[1] hand with some curious odds and ends: an account of an earthquake in 723/3 and a list of the Muses. But *above* the text space on this page, in the upper margin, the first

[1] So Maas on palaeographical grounds; it can be added that V^{1} would presumably have written his excerpt from the dialogue in the text space of fol. 242^{v} rather than the margin if it had still been empty.

hand then copied the first seven exchanges of the dialogue and the summary of the rest quoted above.

Where did he find this material? Hardly from an intact MS. of his main source, since the words he quotes do not either constitute a proper introduction to the revolt or join up properly with the point where his own narrative begins again. To cobble the gap he wrote an abrupt sentence of his own (*καὶ ἀπέστειλεν ὁ βασιλεὺς ἰδεῖν τί κράζουσιν*) to *replace* the words *ὡς ἔτυχεν . . . στασιάζουσιν*. The scribe of Monacensis 557, copied direct from V, appreciated his predecessor's intention and duly omitted these words so as to give an intelligible (though of course historically unsatisfactory) narrative.

It seems then that the original text of the *Paschal Chronicle* did *not* contain the dialogue. V's source for the excerpt quoted need be no earlier now than the date of V itself (probably tenth century). Thus Theophanes immediately becomes a serious possibility—and not only because of the close verbal parallels between the two versions of the dialogue and the introduction to it.

The account of the earthquake of 723/4 quoted on the very same page fol. 242^{v} *was* taken from Theophanes (412.6f.).[1] It is introduced with the rubric *ἐκ τοῦ μεγάλου χρονογράφου*. Stein, apparently thinking that it was the excerpt from the dialogue that is so cited, objects that 'le *μέγας χρονογράφος* n'est certes pas Théophane ainsi que Maas le prétend avec témérité, mais très vraisemblablement Jean d'Antioche', quoting *Chron. Pasch.* 694 as a parallel. *dormitat Homerus*. A chronicler who stopped at the year 610 cannot have mentioned an event of 723/4! In this case at least the 'great chronographer' *must* be Theophanes. As for *Chron. Pasch.* 694, it does indeed contain another marginal excerpt (concerning Maurice's dealings with the Avars) taken *ἐκ τοῦ μεγάλου χρονογράφου*. Here John of Antioch (who is full on Maurice) is a theoretical possibility,[2] but (quite apart from the improbability of *μέγας χρονογράφος* being used of two different chroniclers) this long excerpt does correspond very closely indeed with the text of Theophanes (278.32–279.8 and 280.5–9).

We may conclude, then, that one at least of the scribes who worked on V had access to a text of Theophanes and copied excerpts from it into the MS. The reasonable and economical answer to the problem of the dialogue is surely that this too came from Theophanes.

[1] See Maas, p. 47, n.2.

[2] Our only relevant fragment of John (106, *Exc. de Insid.* p. 147) has nothing in common with the excerpt. R. Spintler, *de Phoca imperatore Romanorum* (Diss. Jena 1905), 9f., discusses the relationship between John and Theophanes for these years in some detail, concluding that Theophanes did not often use John directly (Stein's claim would require that Theophanes and the excerptor in V copied John word for word). Spintler perhaps makes insufficient allowance for the fact that we have only excerpts of John, but in general I suspect that he is right.

It follows that Theophanes, writing in the ninth century, is our earliest source for a dialogue which, though allegedly the 'immediate' cause of the revolt (*καὶ εὐθὺς συνέβη* . . . 184.3), is (a) unknown to the numerous contemporary sources, (b) irreconcilable with the version of contemporary sources, and (c) ill adjusted to and irreconcilable with the main part of Theophanes' own version. Perhaps the suggestion that the dialogue is misplaced will seem less radical now.

Why did Theophanes put the dialogue where he did and where did he find it? Maas was content to assume a 'senseless and mechanical' interpolation (p. 49). It was Bury who spotted the key point, though without perceiving its implications.[1] His main account of the riot (184.3f.) Theophanes took from Malalas (473–7),[2] yet incredibly he *omitted* the hippodrome scene in which the Blues and Greens proclaimed their unity (474.1–14). Now how could even so unintelligent a man as Theophanes come to omit this vital detail, in truth the immediate cause of the riot? The answer is simple: Theophanes thought that the scene in the hippodrome described by Malalas was the *same* as the scene in which the Greens denounced Calopodius. He reckoned (mistakenly, of course) that he had made a great find; a verbatim transcript of the scene which Malalas had merely described. So naturally enough, thinking that he had already given a full transcript, he excised Malalas' description. The confirmation is provided by a detail observed but not exploited by Maas, Theophanes' adaptation of Malalas' introduction to the riot, which in Theophanes follows immediately after the dialogue:

ἐν αὐτῷ δὲ τῷ χρόνῳ	*καὶ εὐθὺς συνέβη*
τῆς δεκάτης ἰνδικτιῶνος	*γενέσθαι ὑπό τινων*
συνέβη ὑπό τινων ἀλαστόρων δαιμόνων πρόφασιν	*ἀλαστόρων*[3] *πρόφασιν*
γενέσθαι ταραχῆς . . .	*δημοτικῆς ταραχῆς . . .*
(Malalas, 473.5f.)	(Theophanes, 184.3f.)

Malalas puts the cause of the riot very generally 'in the same year of the tenth indiction', i.e. 532. Theophanes puts it 'immediately' after the dialogue because he thought that the dialogue was the same interchange between factions and emperor on 13 January which Malalas had described as the start of the revolt.

It is now possible to see more clearly just why it is not only a

[1] *JHS* 1897, 102. [2] For the details, Bury, pp. 101–4.

[3] *μαϊστόρων*, the MSS., but as Bury saw (*BZ* vi (1897), 508), this must be a misreading of Malalas' *ἀλαστόρων* (Maas retained *μαϊστόρων*, thinking the error to be Theophanes' own).

mistake but a mistake of method to push the Calopodius dialogue back among the antecedents of the revolt. Theophanes connected it with the revolt only because he was under the impression that it was the exchange between factions and emperor which took place on the *first* day of the revolt. This was his *only* reason for describing the Calopodius dialogue as the cause of the revolt (181.32). Once his error is recognized, there is no further reason to connect it with the revolt at all, much less consider it a cause.

Where did Theophanes find the dialogue? As a verbatim report of an actual exchange between emperor and factions in the hippodrome, it must originally have come from faction archives. It was suggested above that faction records may not have provided much by way of context, which would explain why such acclamations so often tend (as here) to be attributed to false contexts (p. 246).

Now it is perhaps unlikely that Theophanes consulted faction archives direct (if so we might have expected more such quotations in his text, whereas the indication is that he took all or most or those he did quote from John of Antioch).[1] Maas thought that he took it from John, which would certainly be the simplest explanation, though such a disproportionately long direct quotation would be without parallel in a chronicle, and some quite alien source cannot be ruled out.

Maas was for dating it towards the end of Justinian's reign, on the basis of the anathema pronounced in ll. 25f. on those who denied that the emperor was orthodox, a pointer (Maas claimed) to the period when Justinian was slipping into Aphthartodocetism. But this is surely a quite unnecessary inference (p. 142). The most natural context for a document which proclaims the oppression of the Greens and the hostility of a Justinian who openly protects the Blues is the very beginning of his reign. The best commentary on the dialogue is *Secret History* § vii, even down to the hyperbole that the Greens were being forced to flee the city at this period (vii.22, cf. ll. 30f. above). Of course, if John of Antioch had recorded it under the same *indiction* year (which began on 1 Sept. 531) as the revolt, then Theophanes' error would be more understandable.

Now John of Antioch wrote *before* the publication of the *Chron. Pasch.* If then the dialogue *was* already in John, why be so perverse (it might be objected) as to insist that the *Chron. Pasch.* derived it from Theophanes rather than John? It must emphatically be stated that ultimate derivation from John would in no way solve the problems that confront us.

[1] Maas, p. 29, and for John's preoccupation with the factions, p. 298 above.

That the *Chron. Pasch.* did use John is probable enough. As Bury's minute analysis has shown,[1] Theophanes and *Chron. Pasch.* appear to have used a second common source in addition to their common use of Malalas, a source which would have to be earlier than *Chron. Pasch.* and would therefore be likely to be John. But we are not concerned with the source(s) of the *original* text of *Chron. Pasch.* here, which is lost beyond conjecture. We are only concerned with the excerpt a tenth-century scribe copied into the margin of his MS. from a source that was evidently *not* another MS. of *Chron. Pasch.*

In any case, if this source was John, then it would follow that Theophanes' amazing misconception about and mangling of the beginning of the revolt goes right back to the near-contemporary John (or at least to *Chron. Pasch.*), which is surely incredible. The central feature of Theophanes' account taken as a whole is his omission of the celebrated union of the 'merciful Prasinovenetoi' and his absurd substitution of the Calopodius dialogue (which he must have transcribed without reading)[2] for that scene. Now both these grave errors manifestly underlie the text of *Chron. Pasch.* as it was patched up by V^1. He has nothing to say about the Prasinovenetoi and evidently thought that the rioting of the revolt proper began *directly* after the Greens had left the hippodrome crying out 'let the bones of the spectators be dug up'.

Now the surviving part of the original text of *Chron. Pasch.* is visibly much influenced by Malalas. John of Antioch too must have used Malalas.[3] Both were in any case close enough contemporaries to have heard by oral tradition of the Prasinovenetoi. The ignorant confusion of Theophanes' account can only be ascribed to Theophanes himself, a man (unlike John, as we have seen, p. 298) quite uninterested in the factions, who did his not very intelligent best to

[1] *JHS* 1897, 102–3. It is perhaps just possible to argue that their divergence over the degree of damage to Probus' house is due to Theophanes' careless reading of his source and that the reference to the house of Lausus slipped out of our MS. of *Chron. Pasch.*, in which case Theophanes could have been using *Chron. Pasch.* direct.

[2] In fairness to Theophanes it may be added that many modern scholars have made suggestions concerning the dialogue which betray similar ignorance of its contents: see pp. 141, 287.

[3] The relevant Constantinian excerpt from Malalas opens, predictably enough, with the words, *ὅτι εἰς τὸ δεύτερον ἔτος Ἰουστινιανοῦ ἀντῆραν αὐτῷ ὁ δῆμος τῶν λεγομένων Πρασινοβενέτων . . .* (*Exc. de Insid.* p. 172.7). It is surprising (and frustrating) that no excerpt from John survives; to judge by the way the *Excerpta de Insidiis* pass from Anastasius to Phocas with one one-line entry each for Justinian and Justin II (frs. 104–5, p. 147), the text used by the excerptors was defective.

combine the versions of a variety of sources some 250 years after the event. Whether or not he took the dialogue from John of Antioch, it was Theophanes who inserted it into the story of the Nika revolt, and it was from Theophanes that V[1] took what he copied into his MS. of *Chron. Pasch.*[1]

ITS METRICAL CHARACTER

Having vindicated (as I hope) one part of Maas's contribution to the problems of the dialogue, I close with some reservations on the other, more famous half of his paper: the claim that such acclamations were metrical. Such was Maas's wholly merited authority in the field of metre that his contention has always been accepted exactly as he formulated it, or rather as it has been assumed that he formulated it, for in his characteristically laconic manner Maas simply set out the relevant texts divided up into what he took to be their metrical units without a word of comment or any statement of general principle. It is perhaps this that has led to the exaggeration of his discovery.

P. Karlin-Hayter, for example, refers to the dialogue quite straightforwardly as a 'poem'.[2] Now it seems clear enough that the factional and other items from the tenth century that Maas analyses in § IX of his paper *are* poems (or songs). From the twelfth century there are a number of such pieces in political metre.[3] We know that the factions had poets and sang songs to the accompaniment of music. There is a useful study of the various types of song by J. Handschin.[4] It seems to me that Maas assimilated two different sorts of performance under the inexact title 'metrical acclamations'. These formal songs are metrical—but hardly acclamations. On the other hand, acclamations such as we are here concerned with are (I would suggest) intermittently rhythmical rather than metrical.

[1] This sort of thing is by no means without parallel in Theophanes. For example, he inserts the famous speech Justin II made when he appointed Tiberius Caesar in 574 (taken almost verbatim from Simocatta iii.11) into an account of Tiberius' elevation to the rank of *Augustus*, which he mistakenly places in 577. In fact Tiberius was made Augustus in 578, as Theophanes himself goes on to record again under that year. All these errors and contradictions could have been avoided if only Theophanes had taken the trouble to read the context in the passage of Simocatta from which he took the speech.

[2] *Festschrift M. Richard*, to appear.

[3] See M. J. Jeffreys, *DOP* 1974, 177 f. Theodoros Prodromos, *Historische Gedichte* (ed. W. Hörandner, 1974), 79f. and nos. IV, V, IX–XIV, XXXI–XXXIII.

[4] *Das Zeremonienwerk Kaiser Konstantins und die sangbare Dichtung* (1942); cf. too E. Wellesz, *Byzantine Music and Hymnography*, Ch. IV.

No one is going to question Maas's analysis of (say) lines 34–40 of the Calopodius dialogue:

ἡμεῖς λόγον ἔχοντες, αὐτοκράτωρ, ὀνομάζομεν ἄρτι πάντα.
ποῦ ἐστιν ἡμεῖς οὐκ οἴδαμεν
οὐδὲ τὸ παλάτιν, τρισαύγουστε,
οὔδε πολιτείας κατάστασις·
μίαν εἰς τὴν πόλιν προέρχομαι,
ὅταν εἰς βορδώνιν καθέζομαι·
εἴθοις μηδὲ τότε, τρισαύγουστε.

The last five lines all contain 10 syllables with word break after the sixth and regular paroxytone and proparoxytone accents respectively at the ends of the two halves. But the lines that introduce this highly rhetorical and obviously rehearsed catalogue of woes do not. In general, the less formal and the more angry the exchange, the less isosyllaby and accent fixing we find. For example, in the whole of the last third of the dialogue, when the Blues join in and tempers are lost on all sides, there is little trace of such regularity, as can be seen from Maas's complicated notation studded with question marks.

Karlin-Hayter claims that the principal part of the dialogue is a poem composed in advance, built up in regular strophes and possessing an overall unity. While not denying that the Greens will have given some thought to what they were proposing to say, I would maintain that the greater part of the dialogue—inevitably so in a 'live' exchange—is improvised.

For example, the section quoted above will certainly have been prepared; the Greens had planned all along to complain about Calopodius. But they can hardly have anticipated the Mandator's replies, and the course of their complaints is sharply diverted by his sudden interjection 'Silence, Jews, Manichaeans and Samaritans', which they naturally feel bound to repudiate. It is surely no coincidence that there is no metrical pattern whatever in these lines (22–9). After this the Greens resume with their prepared material (including 36–40) until the Mandator's reply at 41: 'everyone is free to go wherever he wishes without danger'. Now the Greens cannot have known that he would use the word *ἐλεύθερος*, yet they pick it up at once with bitter irony:

καὶ θαρρῶ ἐλευθερίας καὶ ἐμφανίσαι οὐ συγχωροῦμαι.
καὶ ἐάν ⟨τις⟩ ἔστιν ἐλεύθερος,
ἔχει δὲ Πρασίνων ὑπόληψιν,
πάντως εἰς φανερόν κολάζεται.

The *τις* Maas added in 42 is a stylistic improvement as well as filling

out the line to 10 syllables, but we cannot be sure it is what the Greens said. They *must* have improvised 42–5. Now by improvise I do not mean to imply that the lines were simply invented on the spot. No one who reads the dialogue carefully can fail to notice how very formulaic it is; e.g. three 10-syllable lines end with the conveniently accented quadrosyllable *τρισαύγουστε* (7, 36, 40, and cf. Maas's § III.2.2). And with 32,

μὴ ἀγανακτήσῃ τὸ κράτος σου

cf. 73,

ἂν θεραπεύεται τὸ κράτος σου.

Variations on this deferential formula doubtless occurred in almost any petition to the emperor.

When the Greens mention the 26th murder in the Zeugma the Blues interrupt (unmetrically). To the sharp Green sally:

πότε σφάζεις καὶ ἀποδημεῖς

comes the no less sharp Blue rejoinder:

σὺ δὲ σφάζεις καὶ διακινεῖς.

It is not likely that this particular exchange was specially composed or even improvised for this occasion. In any case, the reply more or less composes itself, the only variable being the verb to balance *ἀποδημεῖς*. For those who had devoted years to the art, this sort of improvisation was no doubt second nature.[1]

As to how it was done, common sense suggests that the *chef* (in this case we actually know his name, Antlas) stood facing his 'choir'[2] and cued them. As the Mandator delivered the emperor's reply or the Blues their insult, he would improvise a reply and mouth it for his fellows to repeat.[3] In many cases the reply would be too obvious and familiar for this to be necessary. The mutual abuse of the factions must have become pretty predictable over the years, and it is

[1] There is a fascinating anthology of modern football 'acclamations' in Simon Jacobson's 'Chelsea rule—okay', *New Society*, 27 March 1975, pp. 780–83. Almost all are perversions or adaptations of popular songs and hymns; the alert fan can pick up a new taunt instantly provided that it fits a familiar pattern or rhythm. 'It is extraordinary', concludes Jacobson, 'that an anarchic, disorganized mob, virtually without leadership, and apparently to no real purpose, can look and sound so awesome' (p. 783). The improvisation of the Byzantine factions must have been much more sophisticated than this.

[2] How many took part in either acclamations or songs is quite uncertain; cf. Handschin, pp. 72f. and F. Dölger, *BZ* 1943, 218–27, for the songs. Many more may have chanted the acclamations.

[3] The *ἐκραζον ὡς ἐκέλευσεν Ἄντλας* at 28 shows clearly enough that the indignant reply *εἰς ἕνα βαπτίζομαι* to the Mandator's allegation that they are not orthodox was made at the 'bidding' of Antlas.

likely enough that much of our dialogue had been heard many times.

Isosyllaby and accent regulation were clearly aimed at where possible, but not invariably or even regularly. Compare the following two loyal addresses to Maurice, first from the Blues:

Ὁ θεὸς, αὐτοκράτωρ, ὁ κελεύσας σὲ βασιλεύειν
ὑποτάξει σοι πάντα πολεμοῦντα τὴν βασιλείαν.
εἰ δὲ Ῥωμαιός ἐστιν, εὐεργέτα, ἀγνωμονῶν σε,
εἰς δουλείαν σου τούτον ὑποτάξει χωρὶς αἱμάτων.

Absolute isosyllaby and perfect accent regulation—at least in Maas' text. In fact Theophanes (p. 287) omits the vocatives in 1 and 3, adds a *τὸν* after *πάντα* in 2 and a *ὁ* before *ἀγνωμονῶν* in 3, while Simocatta (viii.7.9) omits the *σοῦ* in 4. Simocatta's two vocatives we should probably keep and Theophanes' *τὸν* we can probably do without; but I for one would prefer to do without the *σοῦ* as well and insert his *ὁ* in 3 (cf. *ὁ πλεονεκτονῶν με* and *ὁ αδικῶν με*, lines 7 and 69 in the dialogue,[1] and *ὁ φιλῶν σε* in Maas § III.4.1), which would of course destroy the isosyllaby.[2]

Now for the Greens:

Κωνσταντίνος και Δο– μεντζίολος,
δέσποτα Ῥωμαίων τρισαύγουστε,
τῷ οἰκείῳ σου δήμῳ παρενοχλοῦσιν,
ἵνα ὁ Κροῦκις διοικήσῃ εἰς ἃς ἔχομεν ἁμαρτίας.
ὁ θεὸς ὁ τά πάντα δημιουργήσας
ὑποτάξει σοι πάντα ἐχθρὸν καὶ πολέμιον
ἐμφύλιόν τε καὶ ἀλλόφυλον χωρὶς αἱμάτων.

Only 1–2 match exactly, and that was achieved effortlessly enough by improvising an imperial apostrophe of the right length. For the rest, as Maas himself admits for once, 'das Metrum ist . . . nicht mehr sicher zu bestimmen'.

The two pieces make an interesting comparison. The first, whatever its metre, is perhaps nearer in tone to a poem than an acclamation (it is indeed called an *ᾠδή* by Simocatta). In the second the Greens have taken the opportunity of incorporating some personal complaints into what is in other respects much the same set of stock formulae differently arranged. One was performed directly after the other, and yet one is much less 'metrical' than the other.

[1] For *Καλοπόδιος . . . ἀδικεῖ με* in 15 the *Chron. Pasch.* offers *κ. . . . ὁ ἀδικῶν ἡμᾶς.*

[2] Compare M. Jeffrey's discussion of the even graver textual variants to Maas III.1, which Jeffreys argues to be in Ur-political verse (*DOP* 1975, 188).

To return to our dialogue, it takes another turn, which the Greens cannot have foreseen, at l. 68 when the Mandator says 'God cannot be tempted by evil (James 1.13)'. The Green reply brings forth further cries of indignation from the Mandator at their blasphemy, and this is what tempts them to scandalize him further by their mischievous (and of course not *serious*) threats to become Jews or pagans rather than Blues.

How is it possible to believe that more than half a dozen consecutive lines of this had been in any real sense prepared? There is a unifying thread to at least the Green side of the dialogue; their sense of injustice. But it is a *genuine* dialogue, whose course is determined by what the interlocutors say. Where they can they say it rhythmically, improvising from a large stock of frequently used formulae and (very occasionally) reciting short passages they may have composed specially.

APPENDIX D

The colours of imperial tombs

In the course of an attempt to solve the insoluble and in any case unimportant question of the factional allegiance of Leo I, J. Jarry[1] advances two arguments worth momentary consideration against Dvornik's arbitrary assumption that he was a Blue.[2]

(a) The *Par. Synt. Chron.* (p. 20.16 Preger) quotes an acclamation addressed to 'Leo Makelles' (i.e. Leo I) by the Greens after his restoration of part of the city wall.

It is not even necessary to point out that this would be insufficient to prove Leo a Green himself (p. 104), for the author of the *Parastaseis* has made one of his characteristic egregious errors. The restorer of the walls must be Leo III (717–41): it is most improbable that the walls would have needed restoring as early as Leo I (457–74), when they had just been restored by Theodosius II in 447, and the position of the reference to Leo in the *Parastaseis* implies that his restoration *followed* the rebuilding of the sea walls by Tiberius III (698–705) mentioned in the preceding sentence.

So the Green acclamation belongs in the context of the restoration carried out jointly by Leo III and his son Constantine V after the earthquake of 740.[3]

(b) Jarry points out that Leo I was buried in a green marble sarcophagus, which he takes to be at once an index of his own factional sympathies and the regular practice of 'Green' emperors. He cites the parallel of the Green Zeno, likewise buried in a green sarcophagus, and then refers generally to the Bonn edition of *De Sepulchris Imperatorum* 'passim', as though this treatise contained abundant further confirmation.

If this were indeed the case, it would certainly be an interesting discovery, for, thanks to a variety of redactions and translations of the catalogue of imperial tombs originally compiled by Constantine Porphyrogenitus, we know the colour of the tombs of the majority of Byzantine emperors over six centuries.[4]

[1] *Syria* 1960, 350. [2] *BM* 1946, 126.

[3] See Janin, *Constantinople byzantine*[2] (1964), 269, 273–4, 276, and 277 for the inscriptions attesting this restoration.

[4] Thanks to the *Life of St. John the Almsgiver* (§ 19) we also know that emperors were asked to specify what sort of tomb they wanted before their coronation, as a reminder of their mortality.

With the aid of an excellent recent collation and critical discussion of these versions by Philip Grierson,[1] it is easy to see that there is no such correspondence as Jarry supposed. Theodosius II, for example, the archetypal Green emperor, was buried in a *red* tomb (i.e. porphyry: Grierson, p. 43). His successor Marcian, a Blue, was also buried in porphyry (p. 44). Justin I, who if not a Blue himself certainly countenanced Justinian's notorious partisanship for the Blues, was buried in a green tomb (p. 45–6). Heraclius, a Green, was buried in white (p. 48).[2] Theophilus, who actually competed in his own triumphal games of 837 as a Blue,[3] was buried in green (p. 57). Michael III, who drove as a Blue in his private hippodrome,[4] was buried in white (p. 57).

There are manifestly too many exceptions to establish any connection. In any case, despite the preponderance of Blue over Green emperors, not one blue sarcophagus happens to be recorded. Furthermore, every eastern emperor from Constantine to Marcian was buried in porphyry, though not one of them is known to have favoured the Reds. There is unfortunately some uncertainty about the sort of marble used for the tomb of the only certain Red emperor, Anastasius (cf. p. 45), but it was *not* porphyry. Nor was it by choice that emperors after Marcian turned to the cheaper medium of ordinary marble, but because their supply of porphyry ran out.[5] But for this *all* imperial tombs might have been red.

[1] 'The Tombs and Obits of the Byzantine Emperors (337–1042)', *DOP* xvi (1962), 1–60.

[2] Perhaps the white sarcophagus excavated in 1969 and identified as Heraclius' by Mango: see *Annual of the Arch. Museums of Istanbul* xv/xvi (1969), 308–9 with fig. 1.

[3] Geo. Mon. p. 707 Muralt (=PG cx.1017).

[4] Theoph. Contin. p. 835.

[5] Vasiliev, 'Imperial Porphyry Sarcophagi', *DOP* iv (1948), 20 (and cf. *Porphyrius*, p. 4).

APPENDIX E

The colours in Corippus (*Laud. Just.* i.319–29)

As transmitted, the text clearly links White with Green (and so, by implication, Red with Blue). And, unlike Malalas (p. 64), Corippus is certainly writing of Constantinople; to be precise, of the races held there to celebrate the accession of Justin II in November 565.

But there are serious difficulties to these pairings in the passage in question, quite apart from the fact that they do not accord with our other evidence from Constantinople. First, Corippus lists all four colours in the regular order, each major colour followed by its normal associate: Green, Red, Blue, White. Next, he equates each colour with a season, so that his order corresponds with the normal sequence: spring, summer, autumn, winter. Here is the passage, duly subdivided with lemmata to facilitate comprehension and reference:

> aurigas totidem [i.e. four], totidem posuere colores,
> et fecere *duas* studia in contraria *partes*,
> ut sunt aestivis brumalis frigora flammis.

(A particularly clear illustration of the division of the four colours into two *partes* inside as well as outside the Hippodrome.)
Green(=spring)

> nam viridis vernis campus ceu concolor herbis,
> pinguis oliva comis, luxu nemus omne virescit;

Red(=summer)

> russeus aestatis rubra sic veste refulgens
> ut nonnulla rubent ardenti poma colore;

Blue(=autumn)

> autumni venetus ferrugine dives et ostro
> maturas uvas, maturas signat olivas;

White(=winter)

> aequiperans candore nives hiemisque pruinam
> albicolor *viridi* socio coniungitur una.

It will be seen that everything conspires to imply that Corippus is using the normal pairings right up till the last line (329), where, having already given Green its allotted two lines at the beginning of the list, he pulls it out of the hat again to link it with White. An editor quite unconcerned with the problem here under discussion (J. Partsch) was so perturbed by the absence of a similar link between Red and Blue, that he posited a lacuna after 329 in which he supposed it to have been expressed—a suggestion taken seriously by Corippus' next editor (M. Petschenig). Their instinct was sound, but the solution mistaken. Even granted such a lacuna, it would still be odd for Corippus to have listed the colours in an order which did not correspond with his pairings.

More serious is the question of the seasons. Like all such multiple analogies, this one has its weak point: Blue, which is less obviously autumnal[1] than Green is vernal, Red summery or White wintry. The only purpose of such a forced equation, quoted as it is to illustrate the twofold partition of the four factions, is that the pairings should be *appropriate*. It is obviously *not* appropriate that spring and winter should combine against summer and autumn. Indeed, not only is it inappropriate, it is positively excluded by Corippus' own introductory remark that the *partes* are divided *studia in contraria*,

ut sunt aestivis brumalia frigora flammis.

That is to say, his basic antithesis is summer versus winter. The combination spring/winter (Green/White) is neither *aestivae flammae* nor *brumalia frigora*. The natural and surely inevitable alliance is spring and summer versus autumn and winter. Compare the order in the versions of John the Lydian[2] (*οἱ δέ φασι πράσινον μὲν τὸ ἔαρ, ῥούσιον δὲ τὸ θέρος, βένετον δὲ τὸ φθινόπωρον, λευκὸν δὲ τὸν χείμωνα*) and the Jewish Midrash,[3] where the only difference is that, here as in the account of the spectators, Blue is given preference (Blue/autumn, White/winter, Green/spring, Red/summer).

All difficulties disappear, conceptual, stylistic, and historical alike, if we correct *viridi* in line 329 to *veneto*:

albicolor *veneto* socio coniungitur una.

Corippus is linking White with the immediately preceding Blue—autumn with winter. The link between Green and Red—spring and summer—is left implicit in their juxtaposition. Partsch's difficulty

[1] Though this was (perforce) well established in the tradition: 'Venetum caelo et mari vel autumno [consecraverunt]', Tert., *De Spect.* 9.6; cf. Cassiod., *Var.* iii.51.5 (as corrected by Soveri, cf. E. Castorina's edition of *De Spect.* (1961), p. 210). See now Averil Cameron's commentary ad loc.

[2] *De mens.* iii.26. [3] See above, p. 67.

about the lack of an explicit link between the other pair only existed while the implicit link did not correspond with their order. The corruption of an original *veneto* into *viridi* requires no 'parade of uncial type' in justification. It is a simple and common error: the confusion of two words of similar shape and prosody which begin with the same letter.

With Corippus corrected, all our evidence for sixth-century Constantinople is in agreement: Red was allied with Green, White with Blue.

APPENDIX F

Heraclius' second marriage

J. V. A. Fine Jr. has recently inferred from a passage in Nicephorus that, while the Greens disapproved of Heraclius' incestuous second marriage, the Blues lent him their support. From this he further infers (dubiously enough) that by 613 'it is evident that the Blues . . . have become supporters of the emperor in opposition to the Greens'.[1] Here is the passage as it is in the only manuscript available to de Boor for his Teubner edition of 1880:[2]

διήλεγχον δὲ αὐτοῦ μάλιστα τὸ ἄσεμνον συνοικέσιον ἐπὶ ταῖς ἱππικαῖς ἀμίλλαις καὶ οἱ τοῦ Πρασίου [sic] *δημόται χρώματος*† *συνήνουν τε ἐπὶ ταύτῃ καὶ συνέπραττον.*

de Boor was clearly right to mark the text corrupt (who is agreeing with whom?). Fortunately, however, another, earlier manuscript has since come to light, which gives the relevant passage as follows:[3]

διήλεγχον δὲ αὐτοῦ τὴν ἐπὶ τῇ ἀνεψίᾳ παρανομίαν ἐφ' ἱππικοῦ ἀγνῶνος καὶ οἱ τοῦ Πρασίνου χρώματος δημόται, καὶ κωλύειν τὴν συναφὴν ἐπείρωντο τὴν ἄθεσμον, οἱ δὲ τοῦ ἀντικειμένου χρώματος συνήνουν τε καὶ συνέπραττον.

It will be evident at a glance that the eye of the scribe of de Boor's MS. jumped straight from the first *χρώματος* to the second. The text now makes perfect sense:

Even[4] the people of the Green colour disapproved of the illegal marriage with his niece at a race meeting, and tried to prevent the lawless union; those of the opposite colour agreed and cooperated [with them].

Yet Fine still declares it ambiguous ('with whom do the opposite colour acquiesce and co-operate?'), inserts into Orosz's text the *ἐπὶ ταύτῃ* of de Boor's text, which he takes to refer to the *συναφῇ* of the preceding clause (in Orosz's text), and translates: 'acquiesced and co-operated *about the marriage*', i.e. approved of it.

[1] *Sbornik Rad. Viz. Inst.* x (1967), 34. [2] *Opusc. Hist.* p. 14 de Boor.

[3] L. Orosz, *The London Manuscript of Nikephoros' "Breviarium"* (Budapest 1948), p. 21.

[4] '*Even* the Greens', because one might not have expected the Greens, Heraclius' own colour, to oppose him. Fine (p. 35) makes rather heavy weather of the *καὶ*.

It *may* be that *ἐπὶ ταύτῃ* (which makes no sense in de Boor's text) should be supplied in Orosz's, but when Orosz's text makes such perfect sense just as it stands and de Boor's is in any case corrupt, caution is indicated. The more so since, as Orosz has shown, the two manuscripts are *not* just two copies of the same text but two different redactions, the Orosz version being (as even this extract reveals) distinctly fuller. A forthcoming study by Cyril Mango will argue that both versions derive from Nicephorus; the de Boor text represents his own reworking of an earlier draft, the Orosz text. If so, then clearly we cannot combine them in this way.

But would the addition of *ἐπὶ ταύτῃ* make any real difference in any case? How could *συνῄνουν τε . . . ἐπὶ τῇ συναφῇ* mean '*approved* of the marriage'? If it means anything it must surely mean (as indeed Fine translated) 'agreed . . . *about* the marriage', which still leaves us with the question, with whom did they agree? Fortunately the answer to this question is very simple; *συνῄνουν* and *συνέπραττον* can only refer back to the last named persons, namely the Greens.

This interpretation is put beyond doubt by the conclusion to the sentence (not quoted by Fine):

[καὶ] Σέργιος δὲ, ὁ κατὰ τὸ Βυζάντιον μυσταγωγός, γράμμασιν αὐτὸν ἐνουθέτει καὶ ἐλιπάρει τὴν πρὸς τὸ γύναιον τοῦτο κοινωνίαν ἀπαρνήσασθαι.

Sergius the patriarch added his disapproval as well. Now if the Greens disapproved of the marriage, the Blues approved, and Sergius disapproved, Nicephorus has surely expressed himself in a very confusing way. The most natural interpretation is that *both* colours *and* the patriarch *all* disapproved. The doublet *συνῄνουν τε καὶ συνέπραττον* stresses the surprising fact that the two colours *did* co-operate over this issue.

So no 'changes of allegiance' under Heraclius.

APPENDIX G

Circus factions and Islamic futuwwa organizations

In an interesting recent paper[1] Sp. Vryonis Jr. has argued that the various futuwwa organizations of mediaeval Syria and Iran were descended from the circus factions of the Byzantine period. I can lay no claim to first-hand knowledge on the Islamic side, but to judge from the material he himself presents,[2] the similarities are not so close as he suggests.

If it is true, for instance, that these organizations, the aḥdāth ('young men'), 'ayyārūn ('rascals', 'vagabonds') and fityān ('young men'), were 'local urban groups which served as urban militia in defending their cities from foreign enemies . . . and protesting against demands of their own central government'[3] (pp. 56, 47), then (as we have seen in Chs. V and XI) they are *not* really very similar to the factions. Least of all at the siege of Antioch in 540, on which Vryonis lays particular stress (pp. 52–3), do the factions appear as an 'urban militia'.[4]

Furthermore the futuwwa organizations appear to lack the two central features of the factions, while the factions lack the central feature of the futuwwa organizations.

The very *raison d'être* of the factions was the games, and the focus of all their activity was the hippodrome or theatre. The futuwwa were not partisans of popular entertainments.[5] The other principal hallmark of factional activity was their bitter mutual rivalry. There is no trace of such persistent local rivalry inside the futuwwa organizations.

The futuwwa, according to Vryonis, 'appears in mediaeval Islam under the guise of an ideology centering about such virtues as bravery and generosity which associations of young men theoretically

[1] *BZ* lviii (1965), 46–59.

[2] Supplemented from the excellent article 'Futuwwa' by Cahen and Taeschner in *Encyclopaedia of Islam*, new edition, ii (1965), 961f.

[3] On their very varied activities at different times and places, see Cahen, op. cit. 961–3.

[4] See p. 124 above, and W. Liebeschuetz, *Antioch* (1972), 263.

[5] Indeed, the fact that individual members participated themselves in aristocratic sports (Cahen, op. cit. 964*a*) marks them off very sharply from the factions, partisans of mass *spectator* sports. It links the futuwwa rather with the *νέοι* of pre-Byzantine times (p. 77), who occupied themselves with the aristocratic sports of the gymnasium.

cultivated' (p. 48; and cf. Cahen, 961). Whether or no the young men really did cultivate these virtues in historical times, the fact remains that there is nothing in the organization of the factions that could have inspired such an ethic.[1] That is to say, the *origin* of the futuwwa must surely have genuinely Islamic roots, so that the influence of the factions on its development could at best be only peripheral.

It must be added that for Vryonis's thesis to have any real plausibility, the factions must have 'continued to indulge their passion for civil strife' in the provinces overrun by the Arabs (p. 50) for much longer than we have any good reason to suppose they did. Their part in the proclamations of Leontius and Tiberius Apsimar (p. 267) in Constantinople, where they naturally persisted because of their essential role in the imperial ceremonial, in no way proves that they even existed outside Byzantine territory in the ninth or tenth century, when the futuwwa organizations first emerge. Indeed, they would only have continued till then if the Arabs had continued to provide chariot-racing and theatrical shows.

Lastly, the point on which Vryonis lays most weight, the coincidence that (a) aḥdāth and fityān both mean 'young men' and (b) the factions are often referred to as young men (see p. 75 above). But what more natural than that what in both cases were young men's associations should be called young men? In any case *νεανίαι* is *not*, as Vyronis suggests (p. 53), a 'terminus technicus' for the factions. Procopius *appears* so to use it in the passages Vryonis cites because, as a purist, he is deliberately avoiding the (to him) vulgar style by which the factions were properly known: *Πράσινοι, Βένετοι, δῆμοι, μέρη*, all foreign to the pages of the great classical historians he was imitating.

Throughout Hellenistic and early imperial times every city had its young men's associations explicitly and formally styled *νέοι* or *νεανίαι*,[2] associations which *did* have a religious focus and semi-military training.[3] In this case it would naturally be absurd to suggest a direct link. The truth is surely that the Hellenistic *νέοι*, the Byzantine factions, and the Islamic futuwwa organizations were all different manifestations of an almost inevitable tendency in *any* society for the young to form their own associations. The only real parallel between the factions and the futuwwa, their proneness to

[1] This would remain true even if the factions did from time to time take part in the religious controversies of their day (and as we have seen there is little enough evidence that they did).

[2] C. E. Forbes, *Neoi* (1933), *passim*.

[3] And cf. p. 341, n. 5 on their participation, like the futuwwa, in aristocratic sports.

rowdiness and rioting, is likewise a standard recurring feature of such groupings of the young, especially against a background of social change and uncertainty. Furthermore, the violence of the futuwwa seems to have been of a much more serious and political nature than that of the Blues and Greens.[1]

[1] Cahen, 961–3.

APPENDIX H

Porphyrius refertus

This seems an appropriate place to list one or two corrections and additions to *Porphyrius the Charioteer*, an investigation which this book continues and completes (see in general the reviews by Ch. Delvoye, *L'Ant. Class.* 1973, 745; J. and L. Robert, *Bull. Épigr.* 1973, n.292 (p. 120); C. Walter, *REB* 1974, 409–10; M. Vickers, *JHS* 1974, 236–8; W. Liebeschuetz, *JRS* 1974, 233–4); C. Schneider, *BZ* 1974, 110–12; R. Keydell, *Gnomon* 1975, 292–5; T. W. Africa, *AHR* 1975, 378–9).

pp. 66/7: G. W. Bowersock and C. P. Jones point out that the inscription here published should be punctuated as follows: *τί πλέον εἶχες τῆς νίκης ταύτης / ἀνθρώποις ἐπιδῖξαι εἰς Πράσινον / ἐλαύνων; κατεβίβασες τοὺς ἀντὶς σοῦ. . . .*

p. 73: There are many examples of *ἀντίς* + gen. in the *Strategicon* of Maurice (?late 6th cent.). See the *index verborum* in Mihaescu's edition (1971), p. 386, and note particularly *οἱ ἀντίς* for *οἱ ἐναντίοι* at pp. 82.19 and 304.17.

p. 81: A nice relief of a circus herald from Rome, shown holding a flag in his left hand and described in the accompanying epigram as 'delicium populi', has been published by S. Panciera, *Arch. Class.* xxii (1970), 151–63 with pl. lvii.2 (cf. *Année Épigr.* 1971 [1974], 21, n.44).

pp. 107–8: A. Turyn, 'Demetrius Triclinius and the Planudean Anthology', *Ἐπετ. Ἑταιρ. Βυζ. Σπουδ.* 1972/3 [1974], 403–50, has now identified the scribe of Par. gr. 2744 and placed the compilation of the MS. *c.* 1320. It was not thus executed directly under Planudes' supervision (which would explain the occasionally puzzling divergences from the Marcianus). On the other hand Turyn has detected Planudes' hand in the corrections of BM 16409, thus proving that this MS. was supervised by him. Turyn also proves that Par. gr. 2744 derives (as I had claimed) from Marc., not BM 16409. The article also casts much fresh light on the milieu when the unified anthology was put together and on its many Renaissance MSS. On the other Planudean MSS see now Turyn's *Dated Greek MSS of the 13th and 14th Centuries in the Libraries of Italy* (1972), 28–39, 90–96.

p. 153: C. P. Jones points out that I overlooked *πρῶτον ἴουλον* in Theocritus, xv. 85, which accordingly reduces a little the probability of the Christodoran echo in *Anth. Plan.* 336.6.

p. 168: Add the mime Porphyrius, dubiously martyred under Julian in Cappadocian Caesarea: cf. Ch. Van de Vorst, 'Une Passion inédite de S. Porphyre le mime', *Anal. Boll.* xxix (1910), 258–75. Also the seditious actor Faustinus of Athanasius, *Hist. Arian. ad mon.* 58, and the monument, crowned by a bronze *biga*, commemorating the generous gift of elephants to Lepcis Magna by a Porphyrius (J. M. Reynolds and J. B. Ward-Perkins, *Inscr. of Rom. Tripolitania* (1952), 159, no. 603). Perhaps (as Michael Vickers suggests) a successful charioteer.

p. 182: I unreservedly withdraw my suggestion that the Red and White *metae* protruded from the *spina*. They were presumably just areas of the *spina* itself.

pp. 184/5, 219/20: John of Ephesus (*HE* iii.24, p. 206 Payne-Smith) preserves an interesting satirical inscription put up by 'some of the city wits' on the tablet on a column Justin II was building in the Zeuxippus:

> Build, build aloft thy pillar,
> And raise it vast and high;
> Then mount and stand upon it,
> Soaring proudly in the sky:
> Eastward, south, and north and westward,
> Wherever thou shalt gaze,
> Nought thou'lt see but desolations,
> The work of thine own days.

A nice parody of the genre, l.5 clearly pointing to a version of the formulaic *ἀντολίης δύσιός τε μεσημβρίης τε καὶ ἄρκτου* (discussed at p. 61) in the Greek original.

p. 214: For golden statues add *Année Épigr.* 1934, 159 (Taurus, cos. 391), L. Robert, *Op. Min. Sel.* iv (1974), 123–5, and in particular the several times repeated acclamation 'A golden statue for the prefect' from the acclamations against Ibas of Edessa (p. 240 above).

It may be added that several epigrams from the bases to statues of Porphyrius and his rivals are discussed in this book; notably *Anth. Plan.* 336 (pp. 48–50), 337 (pp. 50–52), *Anth. Pal.* xv. 50 and *Anth. Plan.* 347–50 (p. 107); see too pp. 28, 33, 107, 320, n. 9.

p. 245: On the connection between charioteers and magic, add Libanius, *or.* i. 161–2; xxxv. 13 and xxxvi. 15; and the anecdote in the *Life* of St. Leo of Catania (referring to the period 681–5) edited by V. Latysev, *Hagiographica Graeca Inedita* (*Mém. de l'Acad. Impér. des Sciences de St. Petersbourg* viii sér., xii. 2 (1914), 23 (a reference I owe to T. S. Brown).

Addenda

p. 16: For some 8th and 9th century seals of demarchs, most (honorary) *protospatharii*, see G. Zacos and A. Veglery, *Byzantine Lead Seals* i. 2 (Basel 1972), 2017, 2257A, 2047, 2193.

p. 24: M. J. Sjuzjumov had already objected to the territorial demes in *Učenye Zapiski Ural-skogo Gosud. Universiteta im. Gor'kogo* II (1952), 93–94, as A. P. Každan points out in *Voprosy istorii* 1975, 201–2.

p. 74, n. 2: Add now G. Prinzing's more sceptical approach in *Studien zur Frühgeschichte Konstantinopels*, hrsg. v. H-G. Beck (*Miscellanea Byzantina Monacensia* 14) München 1973, 27–48.

p. 89: 'no evidence that the Pittakia was even a residential area.' P. Speck has now shown that it was probably no more than a square ('ein ziemlich kleiner, abgegrenzter Platz', *Ἑλληνικά* 1969, 430–5).

p. 118, n. 3: John Haldon draws my attention to a 7th or 8th century seal (G. Schlumberger, *Sigillographie de l'emp. byz.* (1884), p. 144) mentioning a *νούμερον* [*τ*]*ὸν Βενίτον* ('cohorte des Vénètes')—a welcome trace of the postulated connection between the Blues and the *numeri*.

p. 251: Procopius, *Anecd.* 29–36 implies that the Blues enjoyed free access to the palace as early as *ca.* 530, and the Greens protest at the lack of such access at about the same period (p. 320 with n. 7 above).

Abbreviations

I HAVE in general followed the same practice as in *Porphyrius the Charioteer* (see p. xi). 'Bonn' refers to the Bonn Corpus of Byzantine texts. References to Theophanes are normally by page and line of de Boor's edition, but occasionally I give as well or instead Theophanes' own *anno mundi* (A.M.) dates. Fragments of Malalas and John of Antioch are quoted from de Boor's *Excerpta de Insidiis* (*Exc. Hist. Const. Porph.* iii, 1905). For the sake of consistency I have capitalized the names of the four circus colours throughout, in quotations from writers ancient and modern (whatever their own practice) no less than in my own text.

ACO	*Acta Conciliorum Oecomenicorum*, ed. E. Schwartz, Berlin 1914f.
AJA	*American Journal of Archaeology*
AJP	*American Journal of Philology*
BARB	*Académie royale de Belgique, Bulletin de la classe des lettres et des sciences morales et politiques*
BIFAO	*Bulletin de l'Institut française d'archéologie orientale du Caire*
BM	*Byzantina-metabyzantina*
BS	*Byzantino-slavica*
BZ	*Byzantinische Zeitschrift*
CP	*Classical Philology*
CIL	*Corpus Inscriptionum Latinarum*
CQ	*Classical Quarterly*
CR	*Classical Review*
DOP	*Dumbarton Oaks Papers*
I. Didyma	T. Weigand, *Didyma* ii: *Die Inschriften*, ed. A. Rehm and R. Harder (1958)
I.G.C.As.Min.	*Recueil d'inscriptions grecques chrétiennes d'Asie Mineure*, ed. H. Grégoire (1913)
IG	*Inscriptiones Graecae*
ILS	*Inscriptiones Latinae Selectae*, ed. H. Dessau

JHS	*Journal of Hellenic Studies*
JRS	*Journal of Roman Studies*
JTS	*Journal of Theological Studies*
MEFR	*Mélanges d'archéologie et d'histoire de l'École Française de Rome*
REA	*Revue des études anciennes*
REG	*Revue des études grecques*

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